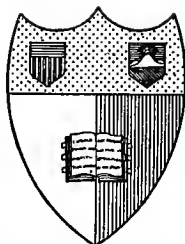




DT  
378  
562



**Cornell University Library**  
Ithaca, New York

---

BOUGHT WITH THE INCOME OF THE  
**SAGE ENDOWMENT FUND**

THE GIFT OF  
**HENRY W. SAGE**

1891

---

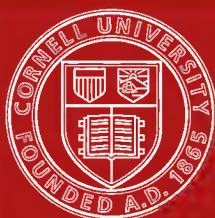
Cornell University Library  
**DT 378.S62**

**Abyssinia of to-day :**



**3 1924 028 594 764**

olin



Cornell University  
Library

The original of this book is in  
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in  
the United States on the use of the text.

ABYSSINIA OF TO-DAY







*Photograph by M. Bertolini.*

HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR AT HOME.







# ABYSSINIA OF TO-DAY

*AN ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST MISSION  
SENT BY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT  
TO THE COURT OF THE KING OF KINGS  
(1903—1904)*

BY

ROBERT P. SKINNER

COMMISSIONER TO ABYSSINIA, 1903-04; AMERICAN CONSUL-GENERAL; FELLOW OF  
THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY; SOCI DU FELIBRIGE

NEW YORK  
LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.  
LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD

1906

S

$$\sqrt[22]{\frac{19}{11}} \sqrt{20}$$

~~3401~~  
~~317~~

A461200

Am

43/  
2

IN MEMORY OF THE WINTER OF 1903-1904

THESE NOTES ARE INSCRIBED TO

H. W. S.



## PREFACE

IN the following pages will be found some account of the adventures and reception of the first mission sent by the American Government to the land we call Abyssinia, but known to the inhabitants thereof as Ethiopia, together with an explanation of some of the social and political conditions there prevailing, and of which little is accurately understood. Abyssinia is merely a fragment of the ancient empire of Ethiopia; but whether the name by which we know it is derived from Habesch, son of the founder of the people, or the old Egyptian word 'abissi,' signifying 'desert-surrounded nation,' or from the Arabic word 'habesca,' meaning 'without ancestors,' no one knows. We do know that the Abyssinians, not ordinarily given to the study of etymology, and resentful of the irony with which that word passes through Moslem lips, have abandoned it in favour of the nobler designation of 'Ethiopian.' To this word they have every historical and racial right.

The time at my disposal (I believe that the speed with which our party crossed the country, transacted its business, and returned, is still a matter of wonderment in Ethiopia) and my work as chief of the

mission prevented me from undertaking any exhaustive studies while in the Emperor's dominions. The opportunity for fruitful historical, and linguistic research is a most tempting one, however, and this I hope may some day be undertaken. We devote millions to the uncovering of ancient cities dead, and we neglect an ancient civilization living, a civilization which found its inspiration in Solomon's Court, and which, preserving its Christian faith through 1,600 years, and during many centuries cut off from all contact with the outside world, hands itself down to us in all essential respects identical with that which prevailed in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago.

We boast of our own Christian civilization, and we are undertaking with our railroads and other Western inventions to break down a civilization virtually like that in which Christ Himself lived and moved; we boast of our law, and we send our agents to teach a land in which judges administer justice based upon precepts of the open Bible in their hand. Returning travellers have usually come back with grotesque tales, and in their own amusement have commonly forgotten the vital facts in regard to this interesting people of Caucasian ancestry. I trust that the earnest student will not be too late, for when steam has replaced the camel and the mule, the old Ethiopia will have passed away for ever.

For my part, I bring back only pleasant memories of a kind and light-hearted race, whose grave courtesy and sometimes affection I am not likely ever to forget. I rejoice over the fact that I took to these people from a great Government a message of goodwill, unem-



bittered by a single ungenerous thought, and that I had nothing to ask which they might not willingly grant.

The project of sending an American mission to Ethiopia was originally laid before President McKinley by myself in 1900. The matter received consideration, and in 1903 President Roosevelt commissioned me to negotiate a needed commercial treaty with the Emperor Menelik's Government. The President manifested a gratifying and very encouraging interest in all that concerned the expedition, and in the Department of State every possible assistance was given in furthering the organization of the party. From the Assistant-Secretary, then Acting-Secretary of State, Mr. Francis B. Loomis, I received, not merely the official instructions which were to have been expected, but active and sympathetic co-operation in a dozen practical details which had to be considered in preparing an expedition for the heart of Africa, where we had no official or unofficial representatives, no point of contact or source of original information whatever.

For the sake of historical accuracy I may add that the Commissioner, the surgeon, Dr. Pease, and the secretary, Mr. Wales, sailed together from New York on October 8, 1903, joined the U.S. *s.s. Machias* at Naples, and thence proceeded to Beirut, where Admiral Cotton's squadron was then protecting American interests. At this point a guard of marines was taken on board, officered by Lieutenant C. L. Hussey, U.S.N., who had preceded us to Djibouti, and Captain George Thorpe, U.S.M.C., who sailed

with us. From Beirut the *Machias* sailed directly to Djibouti.

My great regret is that I dare not undertake to thank the many who, in Ethiopia and out of it, were useful to me in many ways ; but at least I may single out my official superiors in Washington and the members of my staff, whose companionship, beginning in New York and continuing until our separation in Aden, is one of the happy and imperishable souvenirs of our long journey together.

R. P. S.

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

Arrival at Djibouti—French creative skill—Atto Joseph	PAGES
offers sound advice—By rail across the desert -	1—8

## CHAPTER II

On the edge of Ethiopia—Diré-Daouah, a 'boom' city—	
The American Horse Marines — Organizing the	
caravan - - - - -	9—14

## CHAPTER III

On the French road to Harrar—Reception by the Ras	
Makonnen—An elephant hunting party—Back to Diré-	
Daouah - - - - -	15—24

## CHAPTER IV

The lords of the desert delay progress—Sali the wicked—	
Hatching a conspiracy — The party of amity and	
commerce threatened with war—Preparations for a	
midnight attack - - - - -	25—42

## CHAPTER V

Royalty joins the American party—A steer the measure of	
greatness—Night journey across Mount Asabot—The	
only elephant—A fantasia - - - - -	43—51

## CHAPTER VI

The plains of Mount Fantallé—Atto Paulos—The durgo arrives—Hospitality by law	- - -	PAGES 52—64
---	-------	----------------

## CHAPTER VII

Conferring an American decoration — A province where silver and gold do not circulate — Foiling another conspiracy	- - - - -	65—72
--	-----------	-------

## CHAPTER VIII

We are received by the Emperor—The Abyssinian band plays ' Hail, Columbia '—The palace of the Ras Oualdo Gorghis	- - - - -	73—82
--	-----------	-------

## CHAPTER IX

The strenuous life—Language peculiarities—Official society and its charms	- - - - -	83—90
---	-----------	-------

## CHAPTER X

Ethiopian politics—Rôles of America, Italy, France, Great Britain, and Russia—The Ambassadors of civilization and their railroad	- - - - -	91—103
--	-----------	--------

## CHAPTER XI

The Ethiopian problem	- - - - -	104—112
-----------------------	-----------	---------

## CHAPTER XII

The Emperor invites 3,000 friends to banquet with us—The Ethiopian cuisine—Souvenirs for His Majesty—The Emperor returns our call—Testing Abyssinian <i>sang-froid</i> —The succession	- - - - -	113—123
--	-----------	---------

## CHAPTER XIII

The market—Jewellery—Abyssinian art and architecture—The national costume—A Haitian at the Court of Menelik—Ethnology	- - - - -	124—132
---	-----------	---------

# CONTENTS

xiii

## CHAPTER XIV

Manners and customs of the desert races	-	-	PAGES 133—140
---	---	---	------------------

## CHAPTER XV

The United States of Abyssinia—The King of Kaffa—The evolution of Ethiopia under Menelik — Property rights	-	-	-	-	-	141—149
--	---	---	---	---	---	---------

## CHAPTER XVI

The law of the Fetha Nagast, or fundamental statutes of Ethiopia	-	-	-	-	-	150—161
--	---	---	---	---	---	---------

## CHAPTER XVII

The Abyssinian Church — The monophysite doctrine — Language and literature — The army — Mobility of native troops	-	-	-	-	-	162—178
---	---	---	---	---	---	---------

## CHAPTER XVIII

The Caucasians of Cush	-	-	-	-	-	179—184
------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------

## CHAPTER XIX

Trade and commerce—Agriculture—The home of coffee—Economic development	-	-	-	-	-	185—197
--	---	---	---	---	---	---------

## CHAPTER XX

Our leave-taking — Tact and consideration of the Emperor	-	-	-	-	-	198—205
--	---	---	---	---	---	---------

## CHAPTER XXI

The journey homeward—Suggestions in regard to caravan organization — Breaking-up at Diré-Daouah — Once again in Djibouti-	-	-	-	-	-	206—217
---	---	---	---	---	---	---------

## APPENDICES





	PAGES
A. ITINERARY - - - - -	219—221
B. MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN PARTY - - -	222
C. THE TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE EMPEROR MENELIK - - - - -	223—227
MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE ROUTE OF THE AMERICAN MISSION - - - - -	xvi

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

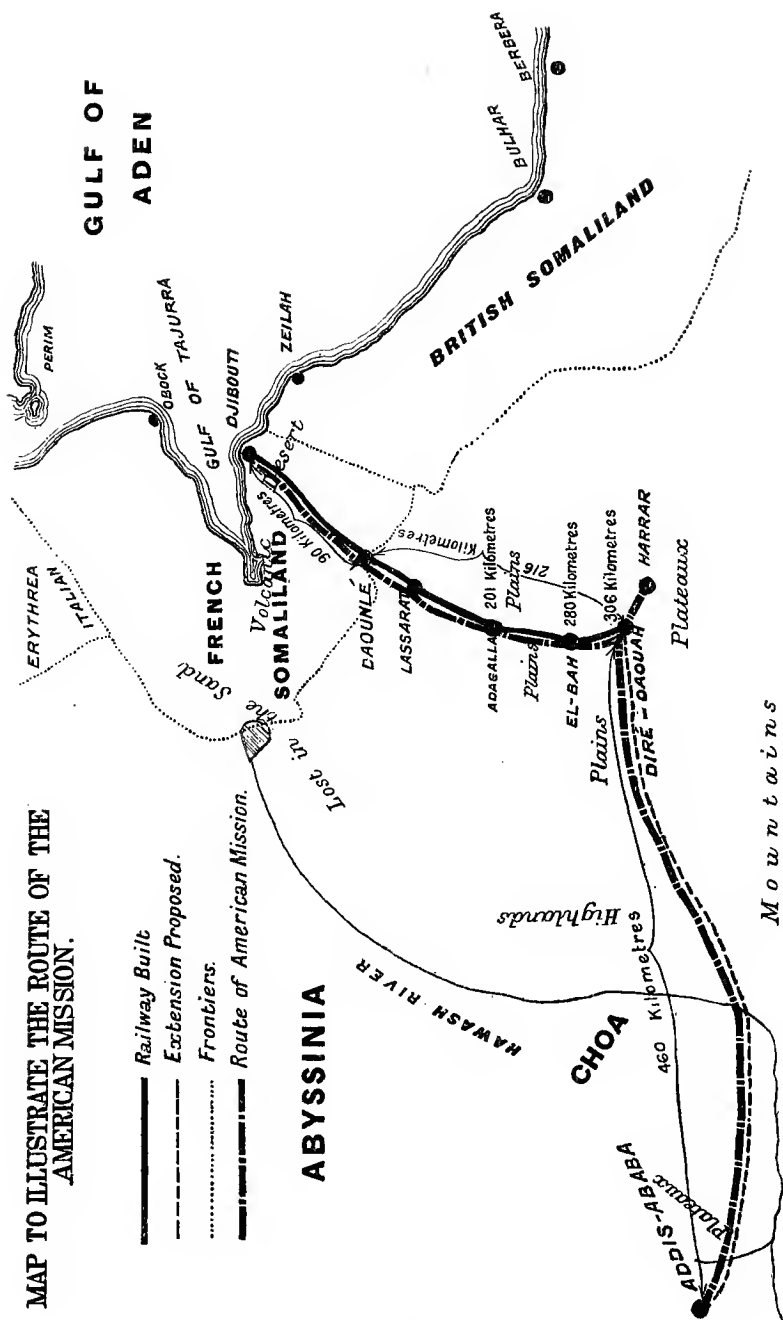
His Majesty the Emperor at Home	-	-	-	<i>Frontispiece</i>
The American Mission	-	-	-	<i>To face page 10</i>
First American Camp at Diré-Daouah	-	-	-	„ 14
His Highness the Ras Makonnen	-	-	-	„ 18
Visit of the Ras Makonnen to the American Military Camp	-	-	-	„ 20
The Principal of the School at Harrar	-	-	-	„ 22
Our Palace at Harrar	-	-	-	„ 26
View from our Palace Windows at Harrar	-	-	-	„ 28
Coffee Plantations near Harrar	-	-	-	„ 30
Ergotto-Momosa : the Confusion of Arrival	-	-	-	„ 38
Eleyé, the King of the Desert	-	-	-	„ 42
Somali Bodyguard	-	-	-	„ 50
The Mission Secretary and Somali Servant	-	-	-	„ 52
Atto Paulos and his Staff	-	-	-	„ 58
The Arrival of the 'Hospitality'	-	-	-	„ 60
Between Chaffee Dunsä and Baltchi : our Caravan under Way	-	-	-	„ 66
Members of the Escort	-	-	-	„ 74
The Emperor and his Suite entering the Aderach	-	-	-	„ 76
Guns taken by the Abyssinians at Adowa	-	-	-	„ 78
American Party retiring from the Aderach	-	-	-	„ 82
One of the Buildings of the Guebi	-	-	-	„ 84
Gentlemen of the Emperor's Court	-	-	-	„ 94
Dinner to the Mission in the Aderach	-	-	-	„ 114
His Majesty at the Palace of the Ras Oualdo Gorchis	-	-	-	„ 122
The Empress of Ethiopia (in the centre) and the Emperor's Grandchild	-	-	-	„ 124
The Market at Addis-Ababa	-	-	-	„ 126
An Ethiopian Gentleman	-	-	-	„ 130
A Lord of the Desert	-	-	-	„ 134
The Ras Oualdo Gorchis	-	-	-	„ 148
Wayside Church : Cross tipped with Ostrich Eggs	-	-	-	„ 162
The Principal Church at Addis-Ababa	-	-	-	„ 166
Dance of Ethiopian Priests	-	-	-	„ 176

# MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE ROUTE OF THE AMERICAN MISSION.

GULF OF  
ADEN

-  Railway Built
-  Extension Proposed.
-  Frontiers.
-  Route of American Mission.

ABYSSINIA





# ABYSSINIA OF TO-DAY

## CHAPTER I

Arrival at Djibouti—French creative skill—Atto Joseph offers sound advice—By rail across the desert.

VERY curious and somewhat nebulous views prevailed when the President's intention of sending an official mission to Ethiopia was announced in the summer of 1903. In the main, comment was friendly and encouraging. It was generally agreed that Mr. Roosevelt's Commissioner ought to have no difficulty in ensnaring and bringing home with him whatever of Ethiopian trade there might be worth having. Some thought that the principal purpose of this expedition was to carry off the Emperor in person, as a sort of willing captive, to visit our country and our Exposition at St. Louis. A London newspaper reported that 'big ideas lurked behind the trip,' and, upon the alleged authority of one of the Commissioner's colleagues at Marseilles, who was further described as 'portentously silent,' it sapiently observed, with reckless indifference to the fact of there being no Abyssinian coast, that 'the establishment of a *point d'appui* on the Abyssinian coast was not to be left out of consideration.' Agitation was announced in Berlin as a consequence

of the President's determination, but Paris was said to be unmoved, beyond noting, with something like sarcasm, that 'free entry' was desired by the Commissioner for presents of fabulous value, destined for the Emperor. Some thousands of papers were inspired to say something, and usually did it with such kindness that the Commissioner set out wondering how he might possibly satisfy the expectations so confidently put forth. This is one of the disadvantages of an anticipated success. Although our Government had always deemed it important to have friendly official relations with a number of small Powers where our commerce is represented by zero, and had had none with Ethiopia, where for years we had profited by a flourishing trade, nobody seemed to be astonished that the work had never been proposed before.

Under these circumstances, the chief of the mission found himself translated upon the Red Sea coast, and become a personage of mysterious importance. And as this personage persisted in talking about cottons, tariffs, and plain facts only interesting to plain people, and that in a land where diplomacy is writ large and wags its head sententiously, he became speedily even more incomprehensible than had been at first supposed. The remark is attributed to Bismarck that when he desired to conceal his real purposes he found the telling of the whole truth the most satisfactory method, and if the American Commissioner had had anything to conceal, his experience would have been the same as Bismarck's.

Whatever people may have thought, they were all very polite about it. It was a politeness that began when we landed at Djibouti on November 17, and followed us until we said good-bye to the land of milk

and honey. Djibouti, I should begin by explaining, is the capital of a narrow, sandy strip of territory with the somewhat difficult name of the French Somaliland Coast. The French coast begins where the Italian coast leaves off, and when it ends the British coast begins. This, again, joins another Italian coast colony, so that geographically Ethiopia is as effectually hemmed in from the sea as Switzerland.

All of these colonies had been organized in about the same way ; that is, petty chiefs in need of funds had sold such lands as they held in trust for their people, thus giving to the present occupants a perfectly legal title, concerning which there can be no possible dispute, while the white man carries a repeating rifle and the African native a spear. These colonies are all administered with reference to the needs and feelings of the original inhabitants, and although occasionally critical remarks may emanate from countries without Red Sea colonies, it is just as well to recall that prior to the present status of affairs the native tribes were constantly warring with each other, and knew no higher law than that of force.

It is not perfectly well assured that they appreciate any higher law than that to-day. A very shrewd and very able Governor, upon whom these tribesmen look as a father, said to me : ‘ I cannot undertake to prevent them from warring among themselves. They come to me and complain of each other, and I advise them to stop fighting and to tend their herds, but I know that my breath is wasted. I tell them that there are three things which they *must* not do : they must not interfere with the movement of the railroad trains ; they must not cut the telegraph wires or poles ; they must not murder the white inhabitants of the country.

These three things they have been taught not to do, and they keep the peace without a European soldier, and with a native police force of very modest proportions.'

This respect for the railroad was not immediately obtained. When the rails were first laid across the desert, the sons of Islam looked upon the locomotive as a beast, the like of which they had never seen before, and, being brave, they occasionally stood up before the monster and persisted in their attitude, just to see what would happen. And though engineers were careful and kind, a number of missing arms and legs in French Somaliland testify to-day to the futility of these duels between man and steam. When these experiences had once been noised abroad, the Issas bowed to what they believed to be a law of fate, and the locomotives circulated thereafter with perfect security.

In the case of French Somaliland, the Danakil chiefs, and notably the Sultan Simy, sold their birthright for a price, stipulated and agreed upon, of 10,000 thalers, or, at the exchange rate of that time (March 11, 1862), 10,000 dollars. The Italian colony of Erythrea resulted from the purchase of certain territory on Assab Bay by Florio Rubattino and Company, a firm of Genoese shipowners, who there established a port of call for their steamers. In 1882 the company named ceded their rights to the Italian Government, and three years later Rear-Admiral Caïmi took possession, thus proclaiming his mission: 'The Italian Government, friends of England, of Turkey, and of Egypt, not less than of Abyssinia, have ordered me to proceed to the occupation of Massowah, which I have effected to-day.' British Somaliland is a sort of

political inheritance, from an effective Egyptian occupation dating from 1874.

It was a hot day when we landed at Djibouti, but it was the heat of mid-November, which is endurable, because it ceases when the sun is low. In the summer the difference between day and night is that the nights are the warmer of the two. The booming of our ship's guns, which regulations require to be fired in order to speed the parting guest, notified Djibouti that we had arrived, whereupon Djibouti began to dress itself in flags. Diminutive Indian tailors had begun to prepare for the event before our coming, and had produced numerous flags, whereon the number of stars and stripes depended mainly upon the material in hand or the personal taste of the tailor. Between the guns, the heat, and the flags, we might have thought that a 4th of July celebration was in progress, but for the tame leopard which paraded before the Café de l'Univers, and the shiny black Somali children, whose nakedness was not encouraging to my desire to find a market for American sheetings. We noticed that the European inhabitants walked slowly and on the shady side of the street, and that everybody wore white garments and white helmets.

Djibouti is a monument to French persistence and creative skill. It is not my affair to write about the French as colonizers. Opinions thereupon differ. But Djibouti certainly is admirable. A few years ago it did not exist. Military necessity required that a coaling port should be created, and straightway it was provided. Sea-walls were constructed, harbour lights located, and the tricolour floated from a huge and comfortable mansion. Here, under a steadily-moving punkah, kept in motion by a Somali soldier in

white headgear, shaped like a brimless tall hat, the Governor told me about it as we sipped his iced champagne.

Let me drop a word of commendation for republics with sufficient regard for their own dignity and the comfort of their foreign administrators to provide them with official homes. With the public works came the railroad, and with it the French man of affairs, who erected houses of coral rock and made himself comfortable, as the Frenchman always does and always will. This was the period of the 'boom,' for the railroad work required an army of employés, temporary shops, and much else of an ephemeral character. When the railroad had pushed its length 300 miles across the desert, Djibouti resumed its status as a port of call for numerous African steamer lines, and waited, as it is still waiting, for the great expected development of Ethiopia, which will make the French capital its natural point of contact with the modern world. Indeed, it was this expectation, and the partial completion of the railroad, that took me to Africa. Hitherto, trade in general, and American trade in particular, had drifted to Aden, thence across to any one of half a dozen ports, where camels took it up, and plodded into the interior. The railroad meant evolution and revolution; it was time for a watchful people like ours to be up and doing.

Between checking up the contents of numerous black canvas bags and sundry boxes, the conversion of convenient French currency into large and invariably dirty Maria Theresa thalers, and the receiving and paying of visits which pleasure and courtesy demanded, the two days in Djibouti passed quickly.

Among my first visitors was the Atto Joseph de Galan, representative of His Majesty Menelik II. at Djibouti. The Atto Joseph speaks French fluently, has visited Europe, and he gave me always good advice, whether it related to the purchase of a mule, the selection of an interpreter, or the usages of the Court.

‘The Emperor will be glad to see you,’ said he, ‘very glad, and when you talk with him, as you have to me, you will find in him a friend. Those who have visited my country and have failed, have not understood human nature. They have heard that we are a slow people, seldom ready to advance a definite proposition. Therefore, they have been vague, and have talked in parables. They have heard that the new-comer must be provided with gifts, and they scatter their gifts to take the place of reasons. Thus suspicion follows upon distrust. But you take the advice of an old man—speak simply, speak plainly, and be sincere. Your ways are not our ways; we shall like better to see you as you are than to see you trying to seem like ourselves.’

The advice of shrewd old Atto Joseph reminded me of the counsel which he gave Hugues le Roux, the French writer and traveller, and which had stood him in good stead. ‘In Abyssinia,’ said Atto Joseph, ‘do everything in laughing.’ Very possibly the black philosopher’s belief in the efficacy of patience and good-humour is quite as applicable in America as it is in the land of the tribe of Judah.

Our experiences at Djibouti ended in a blaze of glory at the ‘Government,’ where an amiable Governor\* and his charming wife, surrounded by

\* The Governor-Intérimaire, M. Albert Dubarry, received the party upon its arrival in Djibouti. Upon the return of the

the leading residents, made fête over us in the most graceful and hospitable manner possible. The next morning, when the sun rose out of the Indian Ocean, we said good-bye to Djibouti, and set forth by rail for Ethiopia.

In a train of French-made cars, we crept slowly along the narrow-gauge track and across the desert, remarkable only for its brush and stones, the monotony of the journey occasionally being broken by stops at native villages. As the day grew older the landscape improved. We had now reached the second plateau, and great expanses of dry grass or forests of mimosa-trees replaced the débris of the volcanic age. Occasionally groups of antelopes or graceful little 'dig-digs' would stop to look at the moving train, and then walk leisurely into the 'brousse.' We passed through magnificent grazing country, which evidently benefited by summer rains. Though called a desert, dry grass three feet tall carpeted the soil, and furnished excellent nourishment for numerous flocks and herds. Except where torrential rains had made crevasses in the rich soft earth, as the streams sought the water-courses, an automobile might have been directed across the smooth and limitless plain. Our train was comfortable, quite up to the usual European standard, the cars, however, having double roofs as a protection against the sun. It was dark when we arrived at the present terminus of the railroad, 308 kilometres from the coast.

We had reached the land of Cush.

---

expedition in January, Governor Bonhourre had arrived from France, and extended no less hospitable attentions than M. Dubarry.



## CHAPTER II

On the edge of Ethiopia—Diré-Daouah, a 'boom city'—The American Horse Marines—Organizing the caravan.

WE had crossed the Ethiopian frontier some time before reaching Diré-Daouah, but at the town named we first encountered the outward and visible sign of the orderly administration of him who signs himself 'The Lion of the Tribe of Judah has conquered. Menelik II., by the grace of God King of Kings of Ethiopia.' The Somali railway guards were drawn up at attention to receive us, M. Pierre Carette presented the compliments of the railway management, and from many of those who afterwards became our good friends we received the warm welcome that goes out to the stranger always from every Ethiopian, whether his skin be white or black.

It was too dark to see the evidences of the rapid growth and prosperity of this queen city of the desert, created within a twelvemonth—a 'boom city,' as we should say in America. We knew, however, that we had left behind the blazing, trackless desert. An invigorating breeze came down from the Harari mountains, and the evening air was cool. Across the street from the railway-station was the new hotel, and thither we walked between two rows of un-

dressed, amiable savages, who gazed upon us with expressions of mingled curiosity and disdain.

There was good cheer in the Hôtel Pétiaux that night. The next day the task of organizing an expedition began in earnest. If in no other respect, this expedition of ours was remarkable in that it had started off in a ship of State to visit a country without a seaport, and, aside from the Commissioner and his staff, consisted of marines and bluejackets, who were immediately mounted upon mules. Our party consisted of thirty Americans, later reduced to twenty-eight, of whom five were officers, seventeen members of the United States Marine Corps, five enlisted men of the United States Navy, and one messenger. Every enlisted man had volunteered to go, and from the day the party left Diré-Daouah until we said good-bye to Abyssinia they gave me no anxiety and much satisfaction. They made friends of the children of the desert and admirers of the Abyssinians. The Emperor himself visited their encampment, and found more pleasure in watching Private Rossell exhibiting the mechanism of a service rifle than in any other external feature of the American invasion. The soldiers were idolized by our native servants, who imitated their ways, endeavoured to cock their old soft hats, when they had any, in the rakish manner of the marines, proudly wore their cast-off garments, and wept when they were separated. Lean, long-limbed, light-hearted, kind in thought and polite in action, the American soldiers worthily wore the uniform of their country.

Our first camp was made upon the following morning, although the officers continued to reside at the hotel during our stay in Diré-Daouah. We had in the first place to select and take charge of the mules



THE AMERICAN MISSION.



which had been purchased for our account. The commander of the naval contingent, Lieutenant Hussey, had preceded the party in the country by a number of weeks, in order to purchase these animals and to make contracts for transportation. The mules had been well selected ; but mules will be mules, and when Jack Tar took his first lesson in riding there was excitement in Diré - Daouah. The Issas and Gourgouras poured out of their native village to see the sight, squatting on their haunches in the sun, and impassively brushing their teeth with the ends of green twigs as they did so.

These mules had cost anywhere from seventeen to fifty dollars gold. We had arrived in the midst of active preparations for the campaign against the Mad Mullah, then giving the English so much trouble in British Somaliland. The Mad Mullah had written an insolent letter to the Ras Makonnen, Governor of the province of Harrar, and habitat of a large Musulman population. He had threatened to advance on Harrar within three months, and therefore an army had been organized to co-operate with the British, or at least to prevent the Mullah from crossing the border. A number of young British officers were participating in the military work, and had been buying mules at elevated prices, which were promptly applied to our own purchases also. My own particular mule, or one of them, had been bought for 150 thalers, with a pledge from the owner, who shed tears when he parted from this paragon, to buy it back, if still sound, at the close of the expedition for 100 thalers. The mule returned, sound, fat, and unscarred, but the seller had disappeared, whereupon my aristocratic mount was disposed of for 60 thalers — an unim-

portant incident, illustrating that a horse trade is a horse trade the world over.

Finally, we had three worthy Somali soldiers, who joined us after our return from Harrar, chosen by the Ras Makonnen, and whose general instructions were to keep us on the right trail across the desert, and aid us in our relations with the various tribesmen we were sure to encounter.

The mules distributed and the saddles adjusted, applications for service were taken up from an army of youths who, attracted by the announced arrival of our party, had gathered like flies around a honey-pot, eager to take employment at only twice the normal rate of pay. Each applicant bore a certificate from a former employer, and bound himself to work at a wage rate of four dollars gold per month, food to be found, or paid for at the rate of about six cents a day, with such 'gratification' at the end of the journey as merit might justify. It was necessary that each officer should possess a tent-boy and mule-boy, and there had to be a considerable number of similar boys to perform miscellaneous duties for the enlisted men. When our party disbanded, some of our servants were employing servants of their own, and I suppose that if we had remained long enough these servants of servants would have been doing the same thing.

I had already found an interpreter at Djibouti, young Oualdo son of Mikael, a youth who had served M. Comboul, a French engineer, in a similar capacity. With M. Comboul he had travelled throughout the empire, seeking traces of mineral wealth. Upon the death of his employer a year before our coming he had carefully preserved his papers, and had just returned from France, where he had been to deliver

them to the family. The lad spoke French fluently, and half a dozen of the local languages. He possessed many admirable qualities, not the least of which was loyalty. He was a handsome little fellow, with the splendid white teeth which the Ethiopian always has, a shiny black face, and bead-like eyes. He was an excellent horseman and a good shot, and whether he wore his fresh khaki suit and riding leggings, as he did in the European settlements, or his snow-white chamma, as he did at the capital, he made a smart appearance.

I also employed one Gabro Tadick—or, reduced to English, ‘Slave of the Holy Ghost.’ The ‘Slave of the Holy Ghost’ was of wistful countenance, wore a pair of blue overalls, a huge hat, and a red bordered chamma. He also carried a gun. The possession of the gun indicated his superiority over the other servants. He aspired to a servant to carry the gun, for no Abyssinian gentleman moves without both gun and servant, and the more of each the greater is the degree of distinction. All servants were to go on foot to the capital.

Gabro Tadick developed a most extraordinary capacity to contract stomach-ache as soon as he had left civilization so far behind that his return was out of the question. Under these circumstances he produced a mule, which, unknown to me, had nevertheless attached itself to our caravan, and with similar promptness he found in our party an unattached servant, by name Debalchi, who carried his gun and discharged most of his duties. Eventually our caravan passed through Gabro Tadick’s home, whereupon he resigned, being succeeded by Debalchi. Gabro was a worthy youth, and we parted with expressions of mutual regard—but we parted.

Upon the whole our servants turned out to be a faithful and efficient, though variegated, lot of boys—partly Abyssinians and partly Somalis, the presence of the two races and the two religions stimulating the representatives of each. There were disadvantages, however, about the variety, since the Somali boy could not eat meat which had been killed by the infidel, and the Christian certainly could not be expected to eat meat killed by the Moslem. As goats and sheep could not always be summoned at will, our domestics' fidelity to religious duty involved us in frequent difficulties.

The shortest and in some respects the best route from Diré-Daouah to the capital, Addis-Ababa, follows along the base of the mountains, across Mount Asabot, usually in sight of the true desert, yet never quite upon it. This route is approximately that selected for the projected railroad line, and is practicable for camels. Usually the camel caravan conductors prefer to diverge from the mountains, leaving Mount Asabot to the left, in order to cross the great desert. Both routes from Diré-Daouah leave Harrar, the chief commercial city of the empire, well off to the south. A third route, longer but more beautiful, and passing through an orderly and civilized population, takes one from Diré-Daouah to Harrar by a circuitous mountain road, just completed, and thence across the mountains to Addis-Ababa. Mules only can be used upon this route. As contracts for transportation had been made before our arrival, involving the use of camels, the mountain route could not be considered in connection with our party. Desiring, however, to visit the Ras Makonnen, with whom I had been in correspondence, a preliminary side trip was made to Harrar and back again to Diré-Daouah before the real pilgrimage began.





FIRST AMERICAN CAMP AT DIRÉ-DAOUAH.



## CHAPTER III

On the French road to Harrar—Reception by the Ras Makonnen  
—An elephant hunting-party—Back to Diré-Daouah.

WITH sensations of pleasurable excitement we heard the bugle-call at four o'clock upon the morning of our special trip to Harrar. The camels charged with the more important of our supplies had been sent out the day before, in order that they might certainly arrive with us; the tents were to follow. With all the enthusiasm of the novice, our small company set out at a lively canter along the excellent French road. Higher and higher we climbed among mountains as green as those of Tyrol. Brilliantly coloured birds flew about us, and upon one or two occasions we passed whole villages of monkeys. We could now look down upon the lowlands and desert spread out below us, and upon the real Abyssinia in its strongholds above us and beyond us.

For the sake of clearness, let me now dispel the usual thought that all Abyssinia is occupied by the Abyssinians. The empire ruled over by the great Negus Menelik consists of a vast extent of territory, including numerous clearly-defined races, which are as distinctly different from the Ethiopian as is the Tartar from the Mongolian. The Abyssinia that has never been conquered consists of a series of moun-

tainous highlands comprising a sort of confederation of the smaller kingdoms of Godjam, Tigré, Amhara, and Choa. Under the strong direction of its present ruler, this confederacy has become in practice an autocracy. The dominant race occupying these highlands, which was driven back from the sea centuries ago, has renewed its vigour, and in recent years has acquired control of the province of Harrar and other surrounding provinces, the most of which are occupied by barbarous tribes, perpetually desiring to wage war against each other, but held in restraint by a wholesome fear of the wise man at Addis-Ababa. The Abyssinian, properly speaking, is an orderly and peaceful personage, even though he is professionally a warrior; he is not fond of work, but is capable of obtaining work from others.

We were now entering the land of the Gallas, who share the hill country around Harrar with the Ethiopians. The Gallas are a conquered race of excellent intelligence, and they are industrious farmers and safe citizens. When the fine new highway was projected between Diré-Daouah and Harrar, it became necessary to condemn the land required for its construction. The Gallas waited upon the Ras Makonnen, their Governor. Their farms would be ruined, they said; the work *must* not go on: they could not accept the price offered for their land.

‘But it is a good, fair price, is it not?’ said the Ras.

‘It is not the price we complain of, most gracious lord; we don’t want our farms to be destroyed.’

The Ras ordered them out of his presence, saying that there was but one Governor of Harrar, and that he and he alone would say what might or might not

be done. The road was constructed, and a guard prevented interference with the labourers. When it was all over, the Ras called the turbulent spirits before him, and telling them that he had been compelled to exert his authority in order to demonstrate his supremacy, he was now prepared voluntarily to pay them twice the value of their property, thus showing them that their Governor could be generous as well as just.

It was noon when we emerged upon the plateau, in the centre of which stands Harrar, and from an African Switzerland we now entered upon boundless plains of rich and well-cultivated lands. Sorgho, barley, teff, all the vast variety of Ethiopian crops, grew about us, and in the far distance lay a small lake, by the shores of which we lunched sumptuously upon what the French call cornéd beef and hard bread. Tens of thousands of waterfowl swam or flew about the lake, and the shores were black with sleek zebus. One hour's rest was allowed, whereupon we put our weary forms once again into the saddle, determined to cover our thirty-eight miles, and to meet the Ras at four o'clock at all hazards.

Now the scenery again changed. The finished portion of the new road we left behind, and with an equatorial sun in our faces we pressed on between rows of giant euphorbia. A foot-runner met us eight miles out, and, after a hasty inspection and salutation, darted on ahead to spread the news of our coming. Three miles farther on we met the first escort, consisting of a hundred warriors on foot, commanded by a venerable gentleman with a patriarchal beard, mounted, wearing a long purple satin robe. He and I descended from our mules and shook hands, the old gentleman declaring that he and his men

prostrated themselves to the ground. Incidentally, I gathered that the runner who had first met us, and the presence of the old gentleman so far out of the city, had been ordered to ascertain whether our party represented the might and majesty of the American Republic in an official sense, or whether it was merely a private commercial mission. The old gentleman remounted, and while his servant carried his shield, he himself played a wand, twelve feet long, upon the heads and shoulders of the unwary who got in our way, and as the traffic is considerable at this point, and the ambition of youth to follow the procession as strong in Ethiopia as elsewhere, my venerable friend was never without occupation.

We passed hundreds of peasants leaving or entering the city, the movement being exceptionally heavy, owing to the Ethiopian law which requires all merchandising to be done within the walled city, and making it an offence to engage in these transactions without.

We finally descended a rocky path, coming out upon a beautiful plain surrounded by coffee plantations, and with the ancient walled city of Harrar in the foreground. In the distance approaching us we saw dimly a large body of troops, which proved to be a thousand men, in the midst of whom rode the Governor or Ras of Harrar. A man of middle age he proved to be, delicate in form and feature and quiet in manner. He wore a large felt hat, rich robes, white stockings, and patent leather slippers. His hands were delicate and small, seemingly a characteristic of his race. When we met we both descended, and I was again welcomed most cordially. Dusty and weary, hot, and arrayed in khaki, our appearance was



*Photograph by M. Michel.*

HIS HIGHNESS THE RAS MAKONNEN.





in striking contrast to that of the followers of the Ras Makonnen. Having exchanged salutations, the Governor's troops led the cavalcade, the Ras himself riding with me, and my own escort following. As we passed under the brown city walls, a cannon upon the ramparts belched forth eleven additional welcomes, the first time, as we were told, that a mission had been thus received. We continued on through the gateway, and found ourselves in a compactly built city of low, flat-roofed houses of stone, with additional troops lining our progress through the rough and narrow streets.

During our ride the Ras explained that his new palace had been placed at our disposition, and, as the camels had not yet arrived with our tents, the offer was gladly accepted. By this time we had reached the residence of the Ras himself, who invited the entire American party to enter. After passing through a small courtyard, the officers found themselves before an unpretentious two-story building, and then, climbing a flight of stairs, in a long reception-room, in which a table laid in French fashion indicated that something was to follow. Here, in a low musical voice, the Ras, who rules the province with an arm of iron, bade us be seated. White-robed servants immediately brought forth jars of mead or tedj, the native champagne, in which we drank to the health of President and Emperor. With the same thoughtful courtesy, the Ras sent down refreshments to our tired escort waiting below. The day had been hot and long, and the tedj proved to be the most grateful and comforting thing that we had had in Ethiopia. Afterwards the Governor sent jars of it to our lodgings, as long as we remained.

This stimulating beverage is manufactured from honey, of which enormous quantities are found in Ethiopia, the active agent producing fermentation being the leaves of a plant called guecho. The guecho plant is cultivated on a large scale, and sold in all public markets. Its properties are such that it might very possibly be utilized in other countries in a similar manner.

The new palace so thoughtfully placed at our disposition was not far from the residence of the Ras, and proved to be the most imposing structure that we saw during our sojourn. It is of Arab-Indian design, and contains numerous rooms of enormous size, all carpeted with Oriental rugs, and to some extent furnished with French furniture. Across the courtyard was a small Italian hotel, organized and opened on the day of our arrival, and also wholly reserved for our use. We certainly had every reasonable accommodation during our stay.

The following day the camels arrived, and camp was established just beyond the city walls. In the meantime I had formally called upon the Ras, inviting him to visit the camp, which he did the next afternoon, bringing with him his escort of a thousand men. While we were in my reception-tent a confused cry was heard outside, and as I returned with the Ras to his horse it became louder and more intense, and proceeded from thousands of the populace, who had gathered to see the unusual spectacle. I asked Oualdo son of Mikael what it meant.

‘They are crying to you to deliver back their Ras,’ said he, ‘that he may give them justice.’

I learned that it was the custom of the people to thus assemble and cry out for attention, expecting to



*Photograph by M. Michel.*

VISIT OF THE RAS MAKONNEN TO THE AMERICAN MILITARY CAMP.



have their complaints examined by this great feudal chieftain, whose every hour is occupied listening to and deciding disputes brought to him upon appeal. Before I left Harrar I saw him again, and had the pleasure of presenting him with a portrait of the President, which seemed to give him great pleasure. He is one of the Emperor's ablest lieutenants, and has travelled extensively in Italy, France, and England, profiting by his experiences. He is slow of speech, and not as ready a conversationalist as the Emperor; but he is evidently of a studious and reflective turn of mind, and has the unbounded confidence of his people.\*

Our lodgings at Harrar adjoined the largest school, whereof the principal soon became my friend. He was an imposing personage, by name Gabro Johannis, or 'Slave of John.' He could recite whole books of the New Testament by heart, but his knowledge of geography went no farther than Jerusalem and Suez. To him everything else beyond was grouped under the general head of *frangi*, or foreign. It gave me a singular sensation when I announced to this gentleman, who heard it for the first time, that the world was round. The statement seemed so much at variance with his own observation that he called in a number of friends to listen to the remarkable exposition of this *frangi* from America. Finding that I was having some success, I ventured to remark that in

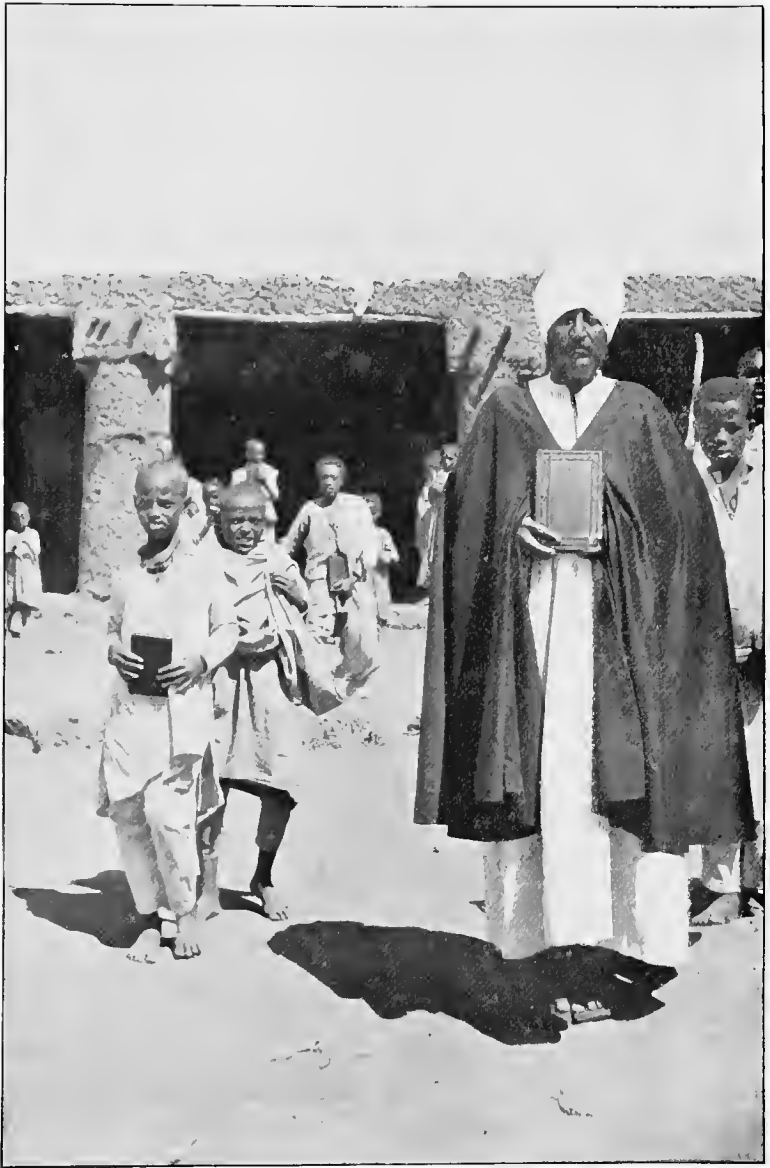
\* This was written in 1904. I deeply regret to say that the Ras Makonnen died unexpectedly in the spring of 1906 at Harrar. His death is universally deplored as a great loss to Ethiopia. No one who ever met the Ras Makonnen failed to perceive his worth. When I first mentioned his name to Mr. Roosevelt, the President observed, 'Why, he must be a Scotchman'; and, in fact, he possessed many of the Scotch qualities as well as the name.

New York there were not only tall buildings over twenty stories in height, but that there were railroads by which passengers were transported from story to story. I am persuaded now that my good friend felt that he was being imposed upon, for his interest seemed to flag from that moment.

Aside from exchanging courtesies, our time in Harrar was devoted principally to visiting the market, which is extremely interesting, and some large mercantile houses, which receive coffee and other natural products of the country, exchanging them for American sheetings and other articles. The population consists of 15,000 Abyssinians, 17,500 Harrari or natives, who speak a local patois, 6,500 Gallas, and 1,000 Armenians, Greeks, Turks, and Europeans. As half the population is Moslem, it requires a firm hand and a steady head to preserve order. It may be said that the Ras Makonnen completely succeeds.

While walking along the streets one day we encountered a returning chieftain who had just succeeded in killing an elephant. He was evidently a Mohammedan, for he was followed by numerous wives, closely veiled, and a hundred or more retainers, who chanted the song of triumph with which the Abyssinian celebrates every victory of this kind. The singers seemed perfectly oblivious of everything about them, and to have worked themselves into a frenzy of excitement.

We reached Harrar on a Saturday evening, and left the following Tuesday. We arrived at Diré-Daouah saddle-worn and sunburnt, but highly pleased with the excursion. The journey had been too long for both mules and men. A few of the former never wholly recovered. The next morning we found



THE PRINCIPAL OF THE SCHOOL AT HARRAR.





many swollen backs among our mules, some of which took care of themselves, others being reduced by the frightful Abyssinian custom of applying hot irons. We never permitted this latter treatment to be followed after that, although there seemed to be no doubt of its efficacy. Perhaps the Ethiopian mule has a constitution which differs from that of other mules, for we saw numerous instances of animals coming in with swollen backs, to which the iron was applied, the same mules starting out with a heavy load on the following day, apparently unconcerned about their treatment.

Long after my return from Harrar, it became known to the Ras Makonnen that the American Government sought to purchase in the city a few of the fine large Grévy zebras to be found only in Abyssinia. With spontaneous generosity, he forwarded a pair of these beautiful animals to me, together with a letter so polite and gracious in its terms that I reproduce it here, as its quaint language well illustrates the characteristic courtesy of a statesman since passed away, whose high qualities were proved in many ways :

*‘ The Ras Makonnen, Governor of Harrar, to his honourable friend, Mr. Skinner, the American Consul-General at Marseilles.*

‘ How are you ? Myself, by the grace of God, I am well.

‘ To respond to the desire which you have expressed to me, I send to you for your Government a male and a female zebra, through the kindly care of Mr. Guigniony, the French Consul.

‘I pray your Government to kindly accept these animals in witness of my friendship and sympathy.

‘I hope that the relations of friendship which have been established between our Governments may go on developing for ever.

‘May the All Powerful accord you long life and health !

‘Written at Harrar the fifteenth Tekemt, 1898’  
(corresponding to October 25, 1905).

## CHAPTER IV

The lords of the desert delay progress—Sali the wicked—  
Hatching a conspiracy—The party of amity and commerce  
threatened with war—Preparations for a midnight attack.

WE were prepared to move on at once towards Addis-Ababa, and, in fact, expected to do so after a day's rest. Unanticipated difficulties now arose in reference to our transport. The terms supposed to have been made with the camel contractor before our arrival were rejected at the last moment, and with hundreds of apparently idle camels munching the thorn-bushes around Diré-Daouah, there appeared to be none for hire. After prolonged discussions, which began at dawn and never seemed to end, the difficulties were finally adjusted, thanks in large measure to the solicitude of our friends Messrs. Carette and Jaume. We found ourselves in command of three caravans of from six to thirty-five camels each. One consisted of Abyssinian camel-drivers and animals, and was to transport supplies for use in Addis-Ababa and for the return trip directly to Addis-Ababa, regardless of our personal movements. Another consisted of six fine Arab camels with as many Arab drivers, and was to transport our personal effects and to travel with us. The third consisted of Danakil camels, driven by savages from the desert, and was to transport our remaining belongings to Baltchi, the point where the

real Ethiopia begins and the savage ceases to feel at home. From this point we expected to hire mules for the last stage of the journey.

Of course, there was no real reason why the third caravan should not proceed with us to Addis-Ababa, our ultimate destination, but argument is of no avail with a Danakil nobleman. It is the rule of the Danakil camelmen to carry freight to Baltchi and no further. Why discuss it? Why should a dog of a Christian even think about such matters? Is it not enough that the proud, if naked, Danakil consents to transport his belongings across the desert?

The details regarding these caravans were in charge of Lieutenant Hussey, of the naval escort. In addition to this variegated assortment of camels and drivers, there was assigned to us, as a sort of guide, philosopher, and friend, and as chief domestic and go-between, the hero of a dozen elephant hunts, and the very man required to uphold the dignity and honour of the United States while we crossed the desert. His name was Sali.

Sali was an Arab, whose thin bare legs and emaciated body were more or less covered by fabrics of brown, yellow, and red. Upon his head he wore a huge turban, and there were rings in his ears, upon his arms and his ankles. He had lively small black eyes, and he shook hands a great deal. All our desert friends liked to shake hands much more than was necessary. It took Sali just two hours to count and recount a small stack of silver thalers, destined for the camel-men's advance pay, upon the evening of his engagement, whereupon he 'iss'héd' ('it is well'), and backed out.

This desert chieftain would have delighted an



OUR PALACE AT HARRAR.



artist's soul, and I shall never cease to regret the failure of my camera to preserve his image for posterity. His duplicity was deplorable, but his picturesqueness, at the head of our procession, until his mule escaped, was undeniable. The sight of my chief domestic, his great toes stuck through his stirrup rings, his gorgeous garments fluttering in the wind, his earrings glistening, and his spear uplifted, galloping through the mimosa-trees, filled my heart with gladness, and—I confess it now without shame for my weakness—I would have been happy had I dared to forgive him later on, merely for the joy of looking at his person.

The delay at Diré-Daouah seemed interminable. On two different days it was announced that we were to start. Man and beast were ready, but we did not start—nobody ever did know, or ever will know, why. In the meantime, the lords of the desert sat on their haunches opposite our hotel in the sunshine, zealously brushing their teeth and regarding us with scornful indifference whenever we came forth.

Finally, it was agreed that on the following morning (Sunday) we should really start. We rose at 4 a.m., and at 6 half a dozen of the Arab camels came into the hotel courtyard, and groaned, as only the camel of commerce can groan, for four hours. The Danakil 'habane' managed to turn up at about ten o'clock, and the Abyssinian, being a contract free-lance, had gone on. We postponed our departure until after luncheon.

During the intervening hours we watched the Arab camel-drivers parcel out the 'charges' among the animals. With great rapidity, they loaded each beast as lightly as possible and, leaving one-third of the

effects assigned to them upon the ground, declared that four-legged creatures could carry no more. Oualdo son of Mikael was sent for. He straightway applied to the situation the plain common-sense which made him by far the most valuable retainer in the entire expedition, by borrowing a pair of scales. He demanded that the camels be unloaded, and after weighing every parcel and ascertaining that our total weight was well within our rights, he easily prevented further difficulty. Incidentally, we learned something about camels.

A camel-load, or 'charge,' weighs, 'in principle,' as the French say, 493 pounds, but in fact never more than 420 pounds. A camel-driver may place his load upon two animals if he chooses—this is his affair, for he gets the same price. If speed is desired, these half 'charges' pay the full tariff. In addition to contract terms, it is necessary to occasionally bestow a goat or sheep upon the drivers, and the end of the journey is expected to bring with it a 'gratification.'

While waiting for the camel-drivers to load and move off, a returning traveller arrived, who had departed from Addis-Ababa some weeks before. He had gone up on a prospecting tour of some kind. This gentleman very kindly supplied information about the desert route, and incidentally suggested that we had better have our guns handy and keep our powder dry. He himself had encountered a band of 500 mounted savages upon the desert, who were returning from some tribal war manifestation. The chief had noted our informant's skill with sundry machine guns and betook himself off. Our informant said that he felt better when he had left the party well behind. With this cheering intelligence we said good-





*Photograph by M. Mahai.*

VIEW FROM OUR PALACE WINDOWS AT HARRAR.



bye to Madame Brincard, of the Hôtel Pétiaux, mounted our faithful mules, and, accompanied by the chief European residents of Diré-Daouah, who escorted us for several miles, set out for the unknown.

To the great satisfaction of all, we were at last under way, and after the nerve-stretching delays of our week at Diré-Daouah the calm of the desert was most welcome. We had moved out of Diré-Daouah at two o'clock, the sun's direct rays being soon tempered as we entered the forest of mimosa-trees, through which we travelled for three successive days. Old Sali headed our procession, the camels had all preceded us by over an hour, and the khaki-clad soldiers of the Republic cantered on in Indian file. We made our camp that day upon a small turf-covered clearing, beside a number of wretched, all but dry wells, which barely supplied sufficient muddy water for our night and morning coffee. As for the animals, they had to be content with the fine grazing and wait until the following noon to quench their thirst.

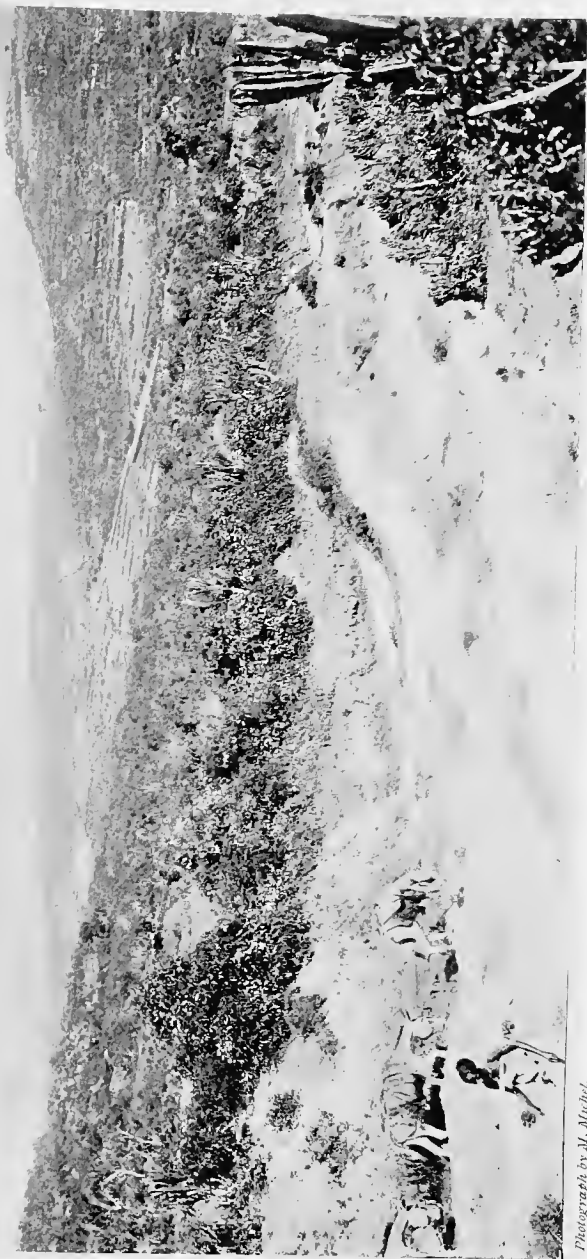
The camp stove was promptly put into commission, and the odours of the flesh-pots of Camacho the Rich were as nothing compared with the aroma of bacon and other homely American things that floated over the Ethiopian desert. A ring of tents, upon the poles of which appeared the historic words, 'Santiago, Cuba,' was formed around the stove. Within the circle the camels were brought—after they had eaten their full of mimosa twigs—and among them the Arabs and Danakils constructed huts of our boxed effects, thatching them with their straw pack-saddle mats. They, too, were soon at work, encouraging diminutive fires, each between three round stones, to cook their porridge of sorgho. A long rope, staked to the ground

by Private Vernon, our trusty Master of the Mules, was just beyond the line of tents, and to it our live-stock was tethered.

A crescent moon rose that night, and after 'taps' had been sounded by our bugler, the post-guards called out the hours, and only the howling of the hyenas broke the silence.

We had supposed that, having once started out with our heterogeneous caravan, we should have no more confusion or trouble. We were mistaken. In the first place, the Danakil and the American had diametrically opposite ideas about other things than clothes. The Danakil liked to rise late. The sun warmed his marrow-bones, and the early mornings were cool. The hotter it was the better he liked it. The American idea was based upon Franklin's advice. We were afraid of the sun. We rose before dawn, but nobody else did. Persuasion was of no avail, and we had not yet learned that the advice of our European friends to make a show of force was to be construed literally. Hence we waited. Old Sali pretended to be very busy on the morning of our second day out, ordering people about; but they brushed him away, and it was evident that he had no authority, and never had had. The Arabs and their six camels moved off promptly, and gave us no trouble thereafter at any time. They were a merry, resourceful lot, lived up to their contract, sang at their work, cared well for their camels, and, if they forgot their prayers, would have starved rather than eat meat killed by a heretic.

The gloomy grandeur of the Danakils was superior to all appeals to hurry from our military officers. In



*Photograph by M. Michel.*

COFFEE PLANTATIONS NEAR HARRAR.



the fatalist's lexicon there is no such word as 'hurry.' To add to the morning's difficulties, the two women camel-drivers came to blows concerning the disposition of a feather-weight parcel. Finally the men-folk interfered, and lodged it upon one of the two camels, whereupon the vanquished shrieked aloud in anguish, and attempted to drive a spear through her colleague's back. Her camel wore a necklace of cockle-shells, and was clearly an object of affection.

'O pearl without price,' she cried (so Oualdo said), 'the she-goat of a heretic wishes to kill thee! May the jackals get her short-legged beast! May her daughters bear no children! They have forced me to overburden thee, O my beloved!'

The poor creature lashed herself into a rage, and again and again sought to send the lance through her companion. Finally the storm expended itself, and that night these same two creatures were doing some sort of domestic work together as harmoniously as though differences had never come between them.

Eventually the entire caravan moved off, each animal securely attached by a rope tightly drawn around its lower lip, and then tied with humiliating firmness to the tail of the next camel preceding. We made habitually something less than three miles an hour with our mules, but the camels rarely exceeded two miles an hour. This meant, of course, our arrival at the rendezvous a number of hours in advance of our baggage. We averaged six hours a day in the saddle. It was our aim to reach our destination about noon, but owing to the defects in our organization we rarely left camp in time to accomplish this design. Returning from Addis-Ababa we did much better.

We had scarcely proceeded eight miles on this

second day's journey when old Sali, dismounting from his mule, had the unpleasant sensation of seeing that animal disappear in a cloud of dust in the direction of Diré-Daouah, and, to complete his discomfiture, with the old man's slippers attached to the saddle. Discredited by ourselves, jeered at by the Arab drivers, and all but spat upon by the Danakils, the unhappy old gentleman girded his flowing robe around his loins, and carefully picked his way along the road, filled with fallen mimosa thorns and sharp pebbles. We were sitting on the grass under the shadow of some fine old trees, on the banks of Ourso Creek, when old Sali limped in, and, removing his garments, sat himself down in the bed of the stream. His ablutions terminated, it seemed to be a kind and Christianlike thing to tell Sali that his services were less valuable than had been expected, and that, whereas it was merely a walk of 20 miles back to Diré-Daouah, there were still some 260 miles between Ourso and Addis-Ababa, and very poor walking at that.

'Sali,' he was told, 'you know you are a good deal of a fraud. You never killed any elephants, and you cannot even take charge of a mule, let alone a caravan. The camel-men refuse to accept your orders, and you are in the way.'

The old man was willing to concede that he was a humbug for practical purposes, but insisted that he was a 'personage,' that he had houses and goats at Ankober, and that, finally, being a 'personage,' he could not be humiliated with impunity; however, rather than be subjected to any such mortifying experience, he would forget his moral injuries and his physical hurts, and go along with us, without



wages. Only he desired that when he had piloted us across the sandy wastes we should give him a 'gratification.' Incidentally he remarked that he was very hungry; he had eaten nothing for two days.

'But the contract was that you were to receive and disburse the money among the camel-men, and that we were not to be responsible for your food or theirs.'

'It is true,' said Sali, 'true as the Koran, your Supreme Illustriousness; but they will have none of me—and I am hungry.'

This statement being unquestionably true, with democratic simplicity Sali was offered half of a can of corned beef. The slayer of elephants looked at it with wistful eyes, smelled it, and evidently wanted to eat it.

'Who killed it?' he inquired.

'What does it matter who killed it?'—perhaps this was said a little sharply. 'Nobody knows. It is good.'

But the old man's religion was stronger than his appetite, for he gave it back, and, turning himself towards Mecca, began to read the Koran.

Our caravan at this time was much scattered, and perhaps a mile long. It was quite impracticable for us to keep together, and we determined, upon leaving Ourso, to detail a rearguard to follow the camels, and to send the main body of the escort and the servants as rapidly as they could travel to each day's rendezvous. The halting-points were fixed, naturally, by the condition of the water-supply. By following the base of the mountains we occasionally came to small streams like the Ourso, or at least wells, while farther to the north these same streams lost themselves in the sand.

On the succeeding day Sali appeared in the rôle of an arch-conspirator. He had kept counsel with himself since his deposition, but, as we learned later, he had managed to have a number of interviews with the Danakil 'habane.' The division of our party into an advance- and rear-guard gave the old rascal his coveted opportunity to get even. With the marines as my escort, I had started on in advance, accompanying the faithful Arab camel-men. Hofallé, an isolated mountain, standing apart from the main chain, and visible miles away, indicated plainly enough the direction we were to follow. Our route lay to the left of Hofallé and under its shadow. By this route we encountered vegetation most of the way and water at the rendezvous. To the right of Hofallé lay the sandy desert, and the home of the Danakil camel-drivers whom we had employed. My Somali soldier policeman, one of the three sent along by the Ras Makonnen, showed us the way, proudly wearing his chamma of American cloth, upon which he carefully preserved and exhibited the manufacturer's mark, 'Dwight's Best Sheeting.' Sali trudged along also. He said that, although dethroned, he was going as far as the Hawash, to visit one of his numerous biets, or farms.

After four hours' going, we reached the dry bed of a stream, in the middle of which appeared to be a fairly good well. Atto Bayane, son of the Governor of Diré-Daouah, was there in advance of us. He had come on to meet his father, then returning from Addis-Ababa. We sat under a huge tamarind-tree and waited for the rearguard, consisting of Captain Thorpe and the bluejackets, who were following the Danakil caravan. As they did not arrive within a

reasonable period, Atto Bayane suggested that possibly they had taken the trail leading to the right of Hofallé instead of to the left, in which case we would probably find them in the bed of the same stream a number of miles below, but in the heart of the Danakil country, concerning which darksome stories had reached us.

We had been particularly warned to keep away from the Danakil habitat, where the wayfarer was sure to be long detained, and mulcted of portable property in every form. Oualdo son of Mikael had been there with his late master, M. Comboul. After making their camp, all the camels had disappeared, and likewise the drivers. The latter went to their several homes, calmly oblivious of poor M. Comboul and their contract. Then old chief Eleyé, who subsequently died in jail for his sins, presented himself, insisted upon sitting in M. Comboul's beautifully upholstered Paris chair, and reposing his buttered head upon the back thereof, while explaining in flowery language his desire for tribute. M. Comboul passed thirty days parleying with the chief, while one of the Somali soldiers escaped and carried the news to the Emperor. A regiment was at once sent to relieve the scientific explorer, and the incident caused old Eleyé many a head of cattle and his people many huts, as the Emperor does not trifle with his Danakil subjects.

The experience of Mr. Macmillan, an American traveller from St. Louis, in the spring of 1903 in this same corner of the empire proved less wearisome, but more sanguinary. Mr. Macmillan—so I was informed—was accompanied by a French newspaper writer, who imprudently separated himself from the caravan, and lost his way in the bush. He encountered a Danakil

and asked his way. The Danakil, instead of conducting him back to the trail, lured him farther on and brutally murdered him. The Frenchman was unarmed and could make no resistance. The Emperor was informed of the facts, and sent a regiment to the spot to demand that the murderer be given up to him. As the penalty for concealing the culprit involved confiscation of herds and destruction of their villages, the headmen finally acceded. The savage was hanged from a tree in the market-place at Addis-Ababa, where his body remained until the vultures had carried it away.

The Danakil regards the destruction of his enemies as the chief object in life, and having succeeded in making away with one, he is permitted to wear an ostrich feather in his hair. It is commonly believed, moreover, that a white man has ten times the value of a black one as a victim. As no Danakil can marry until he has killed and mutilated his man, and as the number of men thus killed has a direct bearing upon the number of wives which he may take unto himself, the ambition to kill may be the better understood.

It was a relief to our anxiety when off in the distance we perceived a solitary mule approaching at a rapid gait, mounted by my faithful interpreter. He was much excited, and said that there had been a 'battle,' and that our small force had won. It was more satisfactory to learn that they would shortly arrive. They did arrive, and we managed to piece out the whole story.

Old Sali had put the Danakils with our equipment, ammunition, and food-supply, up to the idea of loitering until our main party had gone far ahead, with the expectation of thereupon veering off to the right into

their own territory. It was their intention to repose for a number of days in their own homes, thus compelling us, if their plan succeeded, to await their pleasure, and to submit to such extortion as their great numbers and our weakness might render possible.

They had not counted upon the alertness of Captain Thorpe and the bluejackets. When the point was reached where the trails separated and they had started to the right, Captain Thorpe noticed that our own tracks led to the left. The 'habane' was ordered to halt, but declined to do so on the ground that he knew the road and required no suggestions. Oualdo son of Mikael, who proved to be the hero of this adventure, drew his revolver and threatened all manner of things, 'par Ménelik,' which is the final culminating explosive threat in Ethiopia, and means that, if the speaker cannot summarily get what he wants, the Emperor will find a way to accomplish the desired end. As matters now looked serious, the bluejackets, five in number, were ordered to load and prepare for hostilities, and the Somali soldier policeman with the rearguard was ordered to tie the 'habane' and pack him upon a camel. While the order was being executed, the remaining Danakils left their camels and prepared to rescue their chief. Decidedly, matters were looking black for an expedition organized to promote amity and commerce. At this dramatic juncture the female camel-drivers howled and prayed for a cessation of the disorder. Between their entreaties and the grim appearance of the bluejackets, the 'habane' was convinced of the error of his way, and promised to be good. He was thereupon untied. Upon reaching camp he declared that he now understood that we meant what we said, and knew what we wanted, and

that we were his 'little fathers' and the hope of the country, and begged that now he had decided to be good we would give him a ration of dates.

Oualdo son of Mikael taxed Sali, who stood on the outskirts smiling grimly, with having planned the entire incident. Both were much excited, the old man drawing his long knife and Oualdo his pistol. It was by a happy chance that a real drama was averted. That night our men slept with their arms by their sides and the sentries were increased, and there was war-time excitement in the atmosphere.

Our Danakil camel-drivers were almost truculent on the following morning. They loaded promptly, but complained that their numbers were not sufficient, and that they had really desired to enter their own country in order to obtain assistance. The 'habane' asked for the loan of a mule in order to send to his home for the required reinforcements, which could join us two days later. This seemed reasonable, and the request was granted.

We had now entered upon our fourth day, and after a long and wearisome march, camped that afternoon upon an eminence overlooking the creek of Ergotto-Momosa. Forty-eight hours had elapsed since we had had sufficient water for bathing, and it seemed as though we had reached the promised land. In the village close at hand, composed of round thatched huts, lived the provincial Governor, Hadji Mohamed, a Moslem of the best type, selected by the Emperor to keep order among his unruly Danakil subjects. He called upon us that evening, prefacing his visit by the gift of a goat. Hadji Mohamed advised firm treatment of camel-men in general and Danakil drivers in particular.



ERGOTTO-MOMOSA—THE CONFUSION OF ARRIVAL.





'Treat them as a father would his child,' advised the Governor, which particular form of treatment was to be strictly upon Scriptural lines, and also in accordance with the Koran. Champagne was introduced and tendered, but Hadji Mohamed declined it, on the ground that he was fasting. He had brought with him our young Christian friend Atto Bayane, and delegated him to drink in his behalf. The Governor proved to be a plain, sensible man, who hoped that his fever and rheumatism would permit him to offer us some elephant or leopard shooting upon our return. The desert was usually healthy, he said, but in the rainy season, from July to the end of September, there was much fever, and particularly in that locality.

The following day we camped at Ellabella under some large trees near two old wells, the use of which we shared with several thousand cattle. We were still apprehensive concerning the attitude of our Danakil camel-drivers, and inclined to question our wisdom in sending one of these savages back to their home in order to bring on the needed assistance. The assistance seemed to be coming too numerously for our peace of mind. It was evident that something was brewing, for the new recruits gathered in front of my tent, and squatting themselves in a semicircle, opened their palaver. In the first place, the lame, the halt, and the blind were produced, and consigned to the tender mercies of Dr. Pease. The doctor had great success, but confessed afterwards to some fear of trouble arising on his own account upon our return, as he had presented one patient with half a dozen strong cathartic pills, with instructions to take one every day. The patient a few minutes later had

reported a desire to accomplish a quick cure, and had therefore taken the six at once.

The palaver with the camel-drivers, which was long, resulted in the explanation that our camels were the property of the King of their tribe of Danakils, Eleyé, a child of perhaps thirteen years, and as unprepossessing a youth as an itching palm and a protruding set of upper teeth, which were sharpened like a dog's, could make. This King Eleyé was the son of the great King of that name who had died in prison, as I mentioned before, because of his habit of taking toll of caravans.

The son Eleyé, having heard of our arrival, had come with his followers to demand tribute of us. He said that it was the custom of the country to pay tribute to him, and the greater the traveller the greater should be the tribute. In the case of so great a person as my Illustriousness, it was bound to be considerable.

All this was irritating. Yet later on, when I had studied out the matter, the idea of paying tribute seemed not so unjust as might at first appear. Like most customs, it was founded upon a fair claim to compensation. This boy-King's forefathers had found the wells, and had made the water available. The land belonged to these roaming bands, who required both the land and the little water for their cattle. If the stranger passed by, and desired to avail himself of their water and their forage, why should he not pay? Water rights ever have been a source of vexation and litigation. We were all for rejecting somewhat scornfully the pretensions of the young King, advancing the historical proposition that we had millions for defence, but not a cent for tribute. In point of fact, we had

neither. We had 175 rounds of ammunition per man, and while it could be counted upon to a certain point, could it protect us while we retreated back to Diré-Daouah?

When the moon rose that night, it was evident that our Danakil acquaintances were extremely dissatisfied. Oualdo son of Mikael talked gloomily about caravans that had been delayed for months for non-payment of tribute. That night the sentry on post No. 1 reported that a savage had made motions with his hands from across a dry ravine, from which he had gathered the idea that this man and eighty of his kind were coming later to engage in battle. This sounded ominous, and instructions were issued to our men to be ready for any eventuality. About two hours later, while our limited forces were soundly asleep, the sentry saw two savages approaching, and, after calling upon them to halt, fired. That one shot roused the camp to instant action. In less time than it takes to tell it, a guard had been placed by our officers around the camels and mules to prevent a stampede, another around the Danakil camel-drivers to prevent them from joining in any possibly concerted movement, and a third over wary old Sali, who was generally believed to be the author of all our troubles. Sali had consorted all that afternoon with a strange man from the desert. His general attitude had impressed us as extremely suspicious; so he was told that in case of the slightest serious difficulty he would be the first person to be shot, whereat Sali was immediately upon his knees, protesting that he was only an old man, whose heart's desire was to be allowed to go peacefully to Ankober, to end his few remaining days.

In case of the worst happening, we were to form a

circle, face outward, and hold out as long as possible. In the meantime, with the aid of Oualdo son of Mikael explanations were sought from the alleged King and his followers, who were passing the night with our camel people. They were all shivering with fear, being quite unable to comprehend why the soldiers had been called out towards midnight to surround them. It appeared that the individual shot at was simply one of the reinforcements sent for after we had left, and that he had turned up a little later than the rest, with some rope required for the better securing of the camel loads. This proved to be a strictly correct version of the facts, but vigilance was not immediately relaxed.

By this time out from the stillness of the night we heard strange sounds as of many voices, and looking over the crest of the hill at the base of which was our camp, we could see in the moonlight many figures moving about. This new cause of alarm suggested the probability of the uprising reported as imminent by one of the sentinels early in the evening. Volunteers were called for to investigate, and as all hands responded, a detail was formed, consisting of fifteen men, to beat about the brush of the surrounding country. It was a very solemn moment when this detail disappeared in the darkness, in Indian file, and it seemed hours before they returned. Melodrama was now succeeded by comedy, for the mysterious enemy on the hilltops was found to be, not bloodthirsty savages, but an army of huge monkeys, disturbed by the sentinel's gun-shot, and curious to know what was happening in the hollow below. It was their chattering that we had mistaken for human voices.



ELEYÉ, KING OF THE DESERT.



## CHAPTER V

Royalty joins the American Mission—A steer the measure of greatness—Night journey across Mount Asabot—The only elephant—A fantasia.

THE boy-King asked permission to accompany us to Derebella the next morning, and in a moment of weakness not only was he permitted to do so, but was provided with a mule. The most vicious animal in our possession was turned over to him, probably with the expectation that he would break his neck, or the mule. Our own men had failed to do the latter. To the credit of the alleged King be it said that he stuck his great toes into the rings that served him as stirrups, and the mule acknowledged allegiance immediately.

Our route lay across beautiful prairies, upon which members of our party shot wild guinea-fowl and other winged game. Private Wurm shot a wolf, and another one of our men a fawn. A returning caravan was encountered, and when the superb black man in charge of it recognised friends among our domestics he fired his rifle in the air several times to adequately express his joy. The friends kissed each other upon the lips. On several occasions when Oualdo son of Mikael met acquaintances they always descended from their mules, bowed low as they approached, and then

embraced. The conversation began with a sort of invocation to Providence and inquiries after all members of their respective families. When the Ethiopian encounters a superior, he lowers his chamma from his shoulders before speaking. A superior is always addressed in the third person, and if high respect is to be paid the plural form of the third person is employed. The superior alone may say 'thee' and 'thou,' and rarely to others than servants.

At Derebella we camped a long distance from the wells, and had barely sufficient water for cooking purposes. We found here a grave and highly respectable man reading the Koran in his compound. He was presented as a relative of Hadji Mohamed. He appeared not to have any other identity. The compound, or zeriba, consisted, as did most of those we saw in the desert, of two concentric circles of mimosa brush. In the middle the owner had his tent. At night the cattle were driven into this enclosure, and guarded against the incursions of wild beasts. The relative of Hadji Mohamed sent me a goat as a mark of his esteem, and then came himself with a parcel of ostrich feathers. Two of his nephews sent a quantity of milk in hemp jars. The milk, by the way, was sour, as it usually is. The natives seem only to care for it after it has curdled. At this point we took leave of the King Eleyé, who in lieu of tribute accepted twenty thalers on account, in his capacity as owner of the camels. Having thus satisfied our scruples and the avariciousness of the potentate of the desert at the same time, we parted in peace.

From Derebella to Delado we continued across arid, stony plains, succeeded by a richer grassy country, in a drenching rain. This was the only experience of the



sort which we had during the entire duration of our visit. Rubber blankets, or ponchos, saved us from serious results, but the consumption of quinine that night was enormous. A spot that might by courtesy be called clean was vainly sought upon the arrival of our party at Delado. Generations of camel-drivers had camped over the ground, and we had no choice but to do likewise. There was some satisfaction in being a Commissioner that night, inasmuch as it entitled me to spread upon the ground the one canvas tent floor in our possession.

Another very large caravan, consisting of at least 100 camels, had preceded us, being piloted by the Governor of the province, as it contained goods for the Emperor. The Governor, a fine six-footer, with large rings in his ears and a fresh white toga, or chamma, draped about his person, called at once, with a gorgeous Indian, who was also in charge of the caravan. The Indian detailed his bodily woes with great minuteness, and was turned over to the doctor. Our tents had not yet been put up when the Governor called, and although he seemed not to mind the down-pour, I did. Small talk languished, therefore, as he had little to say himself, and I not much more. After one of these protracted intervals of silence, during which we had regarded each other, he manifested solicitude to know how we had been received by other Governors *en route*. He felt his way carefully.

‘I would despise the man who would give your Highness a sheep,’ he said.

‘Yes?’ I replied.

‘I would also despise the man who would give your Highness a goat,’ he added.

It may be stated here that a goat is much more

highly esteemed in Ethiopia than a sheep, its flesh being more tender and more delicate.

‘Yes,’ I rejoined, ‘certainly.’

‘Now, a steer I would consider a fine present.’

‘Yes?’

‘A steer is about as fine a present as any man could expect.’

‘Oh, certainly.’

‘You see, I am not at home here. I live over that mountain. I have some very fine steers over there.’

‘Indeed?’

‘Yes. I expect to send one to your Highness the day after to-morrow. Being a great chief, I must give your Highness a great present. Yes, your Highness shall have a steer.’

We camped next day at Moulu, near a large stream, and on the day following at Meso, another spot quite as attractive. The Governor, true to his word, arrived in the afternoon, followed by two servants leading a fat steer. This munificence seemed to require a prompt expression of appreciation, and the Governor was withdrawn from his retainers, in order that he might choose between a pile of twenty thalers and a watch. His Excellency chose the former, as he did not know how to use a watch. He handed the silver to a servant without looking at it, and remarked that it was one of the satisfactions of being a great chief, that they understood one another.

Ahmed, our head camel-driver, gazed longingly at the steer, and expressed the hope that it might be killed by a Moslem, as such a course would permit him to partake thereof. Oualdo son of Mikael, being a Christian and hungry, remarked :

‘Ahmed, you are a glutton!’

Ahmed retorted that he was not, and added : ‘ To eat and sleep—that is life.’

Oualdo son of Mikael, at my request, asked him if he had no pleasures or ambitions ; but Ahmed’s philosophy of living was simple, and he reiterated his remark. He had no pleasures or ambitions. He desired only to fight the Somalis. Why ? He did not know ; it had always been so, and it always would be so ; it was fate.

We slept that December night under what the French call *la belle étoile*. No tents were erected, as our intention was to leave at 1 a.m. We had ahead of us a long and weary climb across Mount Asabot to Laga-Arba (‘ River of the Elephant ’). There was not a drop of water, so far as we knew, between these points, distant about forty miles. When we returned we discovered a small quantity of very foul water, about midway, in the clefts of some rocks. Hot coffee was served, after rising at midnight. An Ita guide had been found for us by the Governor. He wore an ostrich feather in his hair and strode on ahead, the caravan following as best it could. Lest we might lose our way, it was agreed that there should be no separation of any portion of our caravan or of our party until dawn, and that word should be passed from the rear of the column to the head whenever a camel-load should require readjustment and impose a halt, as frequently happened. The procession was probably a mile long, and a weird procession it was in the African moonlight. It was exceedingly cold, and everybody walked, more or less. We moved at a snail’s pace, because of the gait of the camels, and to remain awake on mule-back was most difficult. The servants alone seemed to enjoy

the journey, and they sang an interminable song all the way.

By dawn we were in a sparse forest of mimosa-trees. The grazing was fine, and the grass fairly alive with game. Several deer were seen, and two were shot. Dr. Pease located an interesting rock in the distance, and, calling attention to it, experienced the queer sensation of seeing it walk off. It was an elephant. It became exceedingly warm after the sun rose, and by noon, having been twelve hours in the saddle, we were all tired and thirsty. The escort was ordered to halt upon an eminence overlooking the valley of Arba; but there was no shade, and therefore no repose. Shortly after we were all encamped on the river bank—not upon the spot we would have desired, but upon the one where our Arab friends unloaded their camels. These camel-drivers always seemed to be looking for the most unprepossessing places, and having found them, managed to discharge their loads and drive off their camels before they could be stopped. Still, there were large trees, and the river was at our feet.

We passed two nights upon the Arba River. The protracted rest was celebrated by making a draft upon our small stock of mineral water and our canned hash, and no delicacies of an effete civilization ever tasted better. As we feasted our thoughts went out gratefully to Chicago. We had closely adhered to our intention of drinking nothing but boiled water up to this time, and as much of it was muddy and of disagreeable taste, the mineral water was far more acceptable to the palate than would have been champagne. Of the latter we had plenty, but nothing less than a Governor brought it out. Europeans in India

pretend that they are able to support the climate only by drinking regularly whisky-and-water. My own observation is that in the desert very little appetite manifests itself for alcoholic stimulants. Whisky we kept on hand for medicinal purposes, but habitually we drank strong coffee in the morning and tea at night.

The Danakil camel-drivers, who by this time were professing respect and affection for our persons, had devoted the day of rest to the rehearsal of a fantasia, or dance, which took place during the evening in front of my tent. The dancing-party formed a circle and set up a weird chanting and stamping, which promised to continue indefinitely, until the elderly man who appeared to be reciting the thread of the story dropped upon the ground with his head between his hands and refused to go on. Allasman, one of the Somali servants, who pretended to speak English, offered this explanation :

‘He sing song, big chief who kill, much, much, much. He no sing more, parce que, his head burn, burn, burn. If he sing more, he go sick, sick, sick.’

Old Oria, the Somali policeman, stepped into the breach by giving a representation of a hyena robbing a grave. Oria had been a very dignified personage up to this point, and I confess to a mild regret at thus finding him out of his character. How many able men have somehow fallen in public esteem by venturing upon the recital of an amusing story, or by the delivery of a supposedly funny speech !

These Somali policemen were faithful as the day is long. There were three of them, and they had been assigned to our party by the Ras Makonnen,

who said that we would have need of them in order to facilitate our dealings with the native chiefs in the desert, and that they could be relied upon for any purpose. He also told them that they were upon no account to permit any harm to befall any member of our party, and that if any harm did befall any American, the same fate would be visited upon the negligent policeman who allowed it. They never forgot for ten seconds their responsibility, and, speaking for myself, I may say that until we reached Addis-Ababa there never was a moment when there was not a Somali policeman within 100 feet of me, looking discreetly into the distance, but always knowing what was going on.

The Governor of Laga-Arba dutifully called upon me with a band of twenty stalwart men armed with spears, who stood back of him and nodded approvingly to the words of wisdom bandied back and forth. The Governor was presented with a watch, which he looked upon with interest, and then turned over to his staff, who passed it from one to another, listening in a mystified manner to its tick, and then inquiring of their chief its practical use. A small portable electric light was shown to the same Governor, and was regarded by him and his followers as little less than a work of enchantment.

The Governor, here as elsewhere, was accompanied by the sick people of his district. These poor people understand enough about foreign caravans to know that there is usually a physician, or at least supplies of medicine, with the party, and they have child-like confidence in the power of both to cure. At Laga-Arba the Governor himself desired his hearing restored. He said that an insect had



SOMALI BODYGUARD.





crawled inside his ear, and was still there. Upon pressing the inquiry, it was ascertained that the incident mentioned had occurred fifteen years before. The Governor seemed to think that there should still be some means of removing the insect and of effecting an immediate cure.

## CHAPTER VI

The plains of Mount Fantallé—Atto Paulos—The durgo arrives  
—Hospitality by law.

THE next morning we were off betimes across beautiful grass-covered plains, with Mount Fantallé in the distance. After a march of four or five hours, we caught our first glimpse of the telephone poles which mark the road between the capital and Harrar. Five minutes later we were upon the King's highway, out of the desert, and in Menelik's hereditary kingdom of Choa. When one has been for ten days cut off from every vestige of civilization and among impossible savages, the first sight of even a telephone pole evokes the joy one feels upon finding one's self among old friends. From this point we travelled along the main road in Abyssinia, and encountered frequent caravans, usually mule caravans, laden with hides, coffee, and ivory. We had proceeded not more than five miles, when we passed under a tree from which was still suspended the head-rest and gourd which had been placed there with the body of some unfortunate malefactor who had been hanged for his sins. The vultures had done the rest.

Camp was made upon a beautiful spot on the banks of the sparkling stream of Katchinhaha. Our able-bodied secretary of the mission and most skilful



THE MISSION SECRETARY AND SOMALI SERVANT.



sportsman, Mr. Wales, distinguished himself at this point by bringing low a very large oryx, after an exciting chase. The wounded beast, after receiving a number of balls, showed fight until the last, lowering its horns and making a final desperate dash towards its aggressors, who finally despatched it with their pistols.

The Abyssinian boys decided that Katchinhaha would be a favourable place for a fantasia of their own, which should be distinctly superior to that of the Danakils, and it was. They sang the 'Song of the Elephant,' which we had heard at Harrar, with frequent alarming discharges of a rifle and energetic demonstrations with the same, even more terrifying than the explosions. It has not yet ceased to be a cause of wonderment to me that we all escaped from our adventures with no serious hurt from the unexpected discharge of fire-arms. The fantasia was very protracted, and included long recitatives, consisting of plays upon words, of which the Abyssinians are extremely fond. The Abyssinian youth can sit for hours making puns, which evoke loud outbursts of mirth from his fellow-kind; but from such explanations as I was able to procure, these jokes seemed to be devoid of real humour.

There was now before us the longest and most trying stage of the journey. The Hawash plain and the Fantallé range have an evil reputation in Ethiopia, as the sun beats down mercilessly upon an absolutely unshaded trail, and the long stretch before the Kassan River is reached is without water, except such as may sometimes be found in the crevices of certain rocks. At two hours' distance from Katchinhaha is the Hawash River, one of the largest streams in Abys-

sinia. Then six hours farther on one finds an exposed rocky floor, in the crevices of which a certain amount of rainfall is retained until evaporated or consumed; and then, again, a six hours' journey brings one to the beautiful camping-ground called Tadechemalka, on the Kassan River.

There being no longer the slightest occasion for the party to remain together for prudential reasons, we now rode in groups, as fancy might direct. The only rule of the road seemed to be that one of the Somali policemen should lead the advance party, and that one should bring up the rear with Oualdo son of Mikael, whose powers as an interpreter were required to settle such small difficulties as might arise. We reached the Hawash River in good season, half of the party descending the steep and high banks and fording the river. Farther up there was a bridge, over which the camels and the other half of the party crossed several hours later. There are a number of such bridges in Ethiopia, constructed by European engineers, but when the streams are fordable they are usually closed to traffic by piles of mimosa brush. We had been told that the 'dildil,' as bridges are called, had been closed in this way, and hence most of the men sought the ford. Many caravans experience everything short of tragedy in crossing the Hawash, and we ourselves had troubles which seemed very serious at the time, although everything turned out in good order at the end of the day.

The remainder of the stage was across the level plain. Even the dark blue spectacles which several of us wore failed to more than temper the white, blinding sunlight. We were now in the richest game country between the coast and the capital. We

saw gazelles and antelopes frequently in groups of four to a dozen, and when we returned two months later to this point we saw whole regiments of antelopes within range of our trail. To the right of our route lay the huge mountain range, in the rocky fastnesses of which is hidden the ancient city of Ankober. Numerous caravans of apparently interminable length crept towards us along the Ankober trail. At another point we found a herd of from five to six thousand female camels grazing under the supervision of a few herdsmen. The female camels are very seldom used as beasts of burden, being carefully cared for and employed for breeding purposes.

Interesting as the day was in some respects, it seemed as if it would never end, and, indeed, it was five o'clock before we were all reunited on Fantallé, a few yards removed from the rocks where we found the promised water-supply. There was still a considerable quantity of shockingly foul water left over from the rainy season in the hollows of the rocks; but, bad as it was, the native servants knelt down and lapped it up from their hands eagerly. The next day more than one of them shivered and moaned in great pain, and then recovered almost as quickly. Rather more fastidious than our servants, we sought rocks above the caravan trail, and found some comparatively clean water, which, being carefully boiled and strained, was harmless, if not palatable.

As we had been climbing gradually all day long, it became very cold as soon as the sun had set. Having now reached the altitude where wood was really needed, little or none was to be found. There were to be no more generous camp-fires around which our

servants could sleep, and how they stood the low temperatures was incomprehensible. They wore nothing but cotton garments, and although most of them had blankets, many had preferred to retain their blanket-money, and to keep warm as best they could. Somehow they managed to huddle together in their chammas, and turned out in the morning after an apparently refreshing and warm night's slumber.

The ascent from the Hawash River had been so arduous that, in spite of the extremely unfavourable character of our Fantallé camping-ground, neither Arab nor Danakil felt like moving on early next morning. Before dawn the camels were driven out of the centre of the camp, where they invariably slept, ostensibly to do a little grazing before loading-time. Though the pasturage was fine, the assigned motive was only a pretext. Our Danakil friends were really trying to trick us out of starting. About breakfast-time they alleged that the camels had been 'lost,' and suggested that we might just as well settle down for the day. This version was allowed to pass for an hour or two, at the end of which time, at the suggestion of Oualdo son of Mikael, a little mild force was employed. There being a suppressed feud constantly on between the Abyssinian and the Danakil, three of the Abyssinian servants were only too delighted to be ordered to drag the head camel-man off in the direction where the camels were supposed to be, and in the meantime the military escort was mustered, rifles loaded, and so disposed as to seem very threatening indeed. Before this evidence of determination the Danakil drivers yielded, and 'found' the camels as quickly and easily as they had lost them. They



succeeded, however, in compelling us to travel, as usual, during the heat of the day.

A fine and comfortable camping-ground was reached well after mid-day on the banks of the Kassan River. The place was called Tadechemalka. There was no town—there rarely is in Ethiopia; the names merely represent definite points on the route. Tadechemalka has the reputation of being malarial, but we experienced no difficulty under that head. As a matter of fact, we were travelling during the most favourable season. A month earlier, or three months later, we would not have escaped so easily.

Atto Paulos, Governor of Baltchi, a town still several days ahead, happened to be camping near by, and called in the evening, with four sheep and as many goats, and renewed his visit in the morning, when he brought several jars of tallo, or native beer. It was our first opportunity to drink beer, and all agreed in thinking it less palatable than mead or 'tedj.' Atto Paulos was extremely polite, saying that, having entered the kingdom of Choa, we were now the guests of the Emperor, and that orders had been issued to all the chiefs to receive us with the traditional hospitality of the kingdom. It seemed as though we had been receiving hospitality everywhere along the route, and the promise of the 'traditional hospitality' of the kingdom sounded formidable, as it proved indeed to be. It meant that, aside from civilities and courtesies, the right of durgo had been extended in our favour. This is an essentially Ethiopian custom, and merits explanation.

There are no hotels in the empire other than the few created by Europeans in two or three prominent centres, and as there are very few markets, the

traveller would fare ill without some special provision of law for his benefit. Having entered the kingdom as guests of the Emperor, we had now the right in law to demand supplies and provisions of the inhabitants, who in turn obtained some slight concession of the tax-gatherers when able to show that they had obeyed the law enjoining hospitality. It is frequently the case that the right to *durgo* is absolutely essential to the welfare of travellers, and it must be said that inhabitants respond to appeals with much more alacrity than might be expected. In our own case we had come provided with abundant supplies for our men, and really required little or nothing. The daily arrival of the 'hospitality' was, nevertheless, an event of much solemnity, and the occasion of great rejoicings among the servants, who gorged themselves on the food which we were utterly unable to consume. In the rich agricultural provinces a procession of as many as forty people would arrive towards sundown, leading steers, sheep, and goats, and carrying baskets of eggs, bread, barley, and jars of mead, curdled milk, and beer, and in the treeless regions bundles of fagots. Elsewhere the *choum*, or headman of the village, would bring a single sheep or goat, with a thousand apologies for his inability to do more. Etiquette and law required that something should be brought, and a scarcely less inexorable law imposed upon the stranger the necessity of recognising the gift in a tangible manner. The exchange of gifts, a custom handed down through the ages, is always accompanied by many polite expressions on both sides. The Abyssinians are an extremely ceremonious people, possessed of an innate courtesy which in many aspects is most admirable.



ATTO PAULOS AND HIS STAFF.



It was to no purpose that we sometimes protested against receiving this largess ; the grave and polite headman invariably said that the law enjoined the delivery of food to the nation's guests, and the law must be obeyed. After a time we resigned ourselves to this overflowing kindness, accepting whatever came to hand, and doing as best we could. When we left Addis-Ababa we had, if my memory is not at fault, ten steers and fifty sheep and goats that we had not needed, and were obliged to give away. Indeed, our compound at Addis-Ababa bore some faint resemblance at all times during our stay to the Chicago stock-yards.

Our first experience with the durgo occurred at Choba, which we reached after a hard and long climb from Tadechemalka. It was reported that certain reservoirs of water existed here for the benefit of thirsty travellers, but the only one we saw was dry, and the nearest river was three miles away. A few jars of the precious liquid, enough for cooking purposes, were brought to us, and when more was wanted it was found that the jar itself, which had journeyed several times to the river, had been cracked. Sancho Panza said that, whether the well goes to the jar or the jar to the well, the jar always comes home with a broken nose. The broken jar in Ethiopia is rather more serious. There was plenty of tedj, however !

When the hospitality arrived, in charge of a brother of Atto Paulos, it included gallons of this beverage, sheep and goats, and native bread in the form of thin cakes of teff meal. The bread resembled gigantic buck-wheat cakes, and if one can imagine a cold and very sour buck-wheat cake, the taste of this bread can be approximated in imagination. The director of the

customs then appeared with several loaves of wheat bread, made of whole-wheat flour ground in a mortar. The director of the telephone-station brought barley for the mules. These gifts were duly inspected, pronounced good, and turned over to the men. Everything was regulated according to the protocol of Oualdo son of Mikael. The proprieties required that the hospitality should be received, together with an accurate statistical return thereof, and that servants should be on hand to take immediate charge of the objects brought and to remove them from sight. Anything short of this might be construed as a lack of appreciation. It took a number of days before we could get our protocol into working order.

As this was the first telephone-station on our route, it was decided to send a few messages to inquiring friends. It was December 13, and we had been out of touch with the great world for two weeks. The telephone director was amiability itself. He 'allooed' vigorously in our behalf, but M. Michael, the very capable gentleman in charge at Harrar, was absent, it being Sunday, and communication could not be established. Expedients were proposed, but as the director could read neither English, French, nor Amharic, it was only possible to give him the message by word of mouth, in the hope that he would retain it, and transmit it on the following day. The Ethiopian memory was not as good as the Ethiopian intention, for the pleasant little man forgot entirely all that he had been charged to say. A month later, when we were returning, he was reminded of his remissness, whereupon he offered to send the message immediately if it were repeated to him.

We next entered the fertile and magnificent province



THE ARRIVAL OF THE "HOSPITALITY."





of Mindjar. Vast expanses of well-cultivated fields, which yield two and three crops per year, spread out before us, and there were sleek cattle and prosperous-looking villagers everywhere. Some of the thrashing scenes were most picturesque. In some cases the straw is strewn about a small area, and beaten with flails, but the usual process seemed to be to drive cattle over it in a circle.

After Choba, we stopped at Minnebella, at a point a little off from the highway, and by the side of a large reservoir filled with water of fair quality. Corporal Wood was bitten by a spider at this spot, and caused no end of anxiety. Steward Fearnley aroused Dr. Pease shortly after midnight, and between the two by morning the gravest danger was averted. The sick man remained behind for several hours, joining us at Baltchi in the afternoon. The country people gathered in large numbers to see our departure from Minnebella; among others, a local minstrel, who accompanied himself on a one-stringed lute. I understand that he sang a song in our praise, announcing that the Americans had come to conquer the world with their kindness, repeating the theme with many variations. As music it was unspeakably bad, and as the expected reward was not forthcoming, the troubadour amended his praises, first converting them into lamentations, and, as we rode off in the distance, execrating us as cordially as he had lauded us at the beginning. These minstrels are frequently encountered, and, like the beggar children of Europe, know perfectly well that they are public nuisances, and expect to be bribed into giving their victims peace.

Not far from Minnebella we passed the first church

we had seen since leaving Harrar. It looked something like the picture of the Chinese pagoda upon the willow-pattern plate. It was round in form, as are all the Abyssinian churches, which tradition says are constructed with some sort of resemblance to Solomon's temple. Either the resemblance must be poor, or the popular impression respecting Solomon's temple is far astray. All of our Abyssinian servants bowed reverently when we passed the church, some of them kissing the soil and some the wooden gateway.

In the distance the mountain of Baltchi loomed up before us, and seemed to recede as we advanced. A village of the same name occupies a plateau upon the top of the mountain which is 2,000 feet above its approach from the Harrar side. The mountain itself constitutes a natural fortification apparently impregnable. How such a stronghold could be stormed successfully is difficult to understand. True, Lord Napier in the early sixties found a way to Magdala, where the Emperor Theodore made his last stand, but the defenders of that period were scarcely capable of making an effective resistance. An invading army to-day would find all the difficulties which the British encountered in the Transvaal, multiplied manyfold by the mountainous conditions. Recently there has been one small example of protracted fighting on the part of the Mad Mullah in Somaliland. This individual, with a half-organized and indifferently-armed army, defied the best efforts of a strong British force, aided by an Abyssinian division. To reach Ethiopia to-day an invading army would have first to cross 400 miles of desert, taking chances of finding water *en route*, and then, in a probably depleted and worn-out state, would have to fight laboriously along mountain trails

which are found and followed with difficulty in times of peace. To administer such an empire, which has enjoyed thousands of years of independence, would be even more difficult. I once commented on these physical facts to the Ras Makonnen, who agreed with me, and added significantly : ' We have had our independence a long time : we shall keep it.'

A stream of water flows around the base of Mount Baltchi ; and, as usual, our caravan people desired to stop here, rather than climb to the height above, where we would be able to secure a good start in the morning. We had insisted upon having our own way in this case, and were tranquilly toiling along the precipitous route, when a horseman appeared upon the plain below, trying to overtake us, and frantically waving at us. He eventually overtook us, and announced that he came as the representative of the Governor, who had been caught napping, and had allowed us to get by his frontier without knowing that we had done so. It seems that Baltchi is in one province, ruled over by Atto Paulos, our friend of Tadechemalka, and the country below in another. The Governor of the lowland had been ordered to receive us royally, and now we had crossed over the line into the territory of his colleague.

' He says,' urged the courier, ' that you cannot go on ; that by the Emperor's orders you are to camp below ; that, therefore, you must camp below ; that if you go on the " hospitality " will be ruined.'

I appreciated the difficulties of the Governor. He had his constituents and his public opinion to face too. He had doubtless spent days gathering barley, bread, tedj, and eggs from his people for our subsistence, and here we were, going right through his dominions.

Excuses and thanks were sent back to the Governor. It was impracticable that, we should camp below ; to do so meant the loss of a day. As a happy compromise, it was suggested that, if the 'hospitality' must be delivered, it might be sent up to Baltchi, and presented with that probably being organized by Atto Paulos. This idea was accepted, and declared quite as remarkable as that of Columbus in putting an egg on end. Joy was painted on the countenances of our Ethiopian friends, whose chief, Atto Hugo, arrived later in state, and solemnly presented two hundred disks of bread, carried by five men, five jars of milk, four jars of beer, two chickens, twenty eggs, and five goats.

## CHAPTER VII

Conferring an American decoration—A province where silver and gold do not circulate—Foiling another conspiracy.

SCARCELY had the Atto Hugo been received and dismissed than the 'hospitality' of Baltchi appeared, consisting of 366 disks of bread, 67 eggs, 7 chickens, 5 bales of barley, 5 bales of straw, and 5 bundles of wood. Finally came the personal gifts of Atto Paulos himself, consisting of 32 disks of bread, 6 chickens, and 10 eggs. The bearers of these presents arrived about sunset, laid them down at equal distances apart, and when Oualdo son of Mikael had transmitted the thanks of the mission, they bowed to the ground and disappeared.

Earlier in the afternoon Atto Paulos had paid a protracted visit, and talked in a lively manner about his country. He was in favour of progress, he said, but on the condition that it did not result in the loss of national independence. The strangers were becoming too numerous to altogether suit him, and were tending to corrupt the people, who were simple in character and easily deluded. Friendship was sealed by the presentation on my part to the Atto Paulos of a large American flag. The Governor seemed much touched, and after being told what the forty-five stars and thirteen stripes stood for, he said, bowing to the earth as he did so :

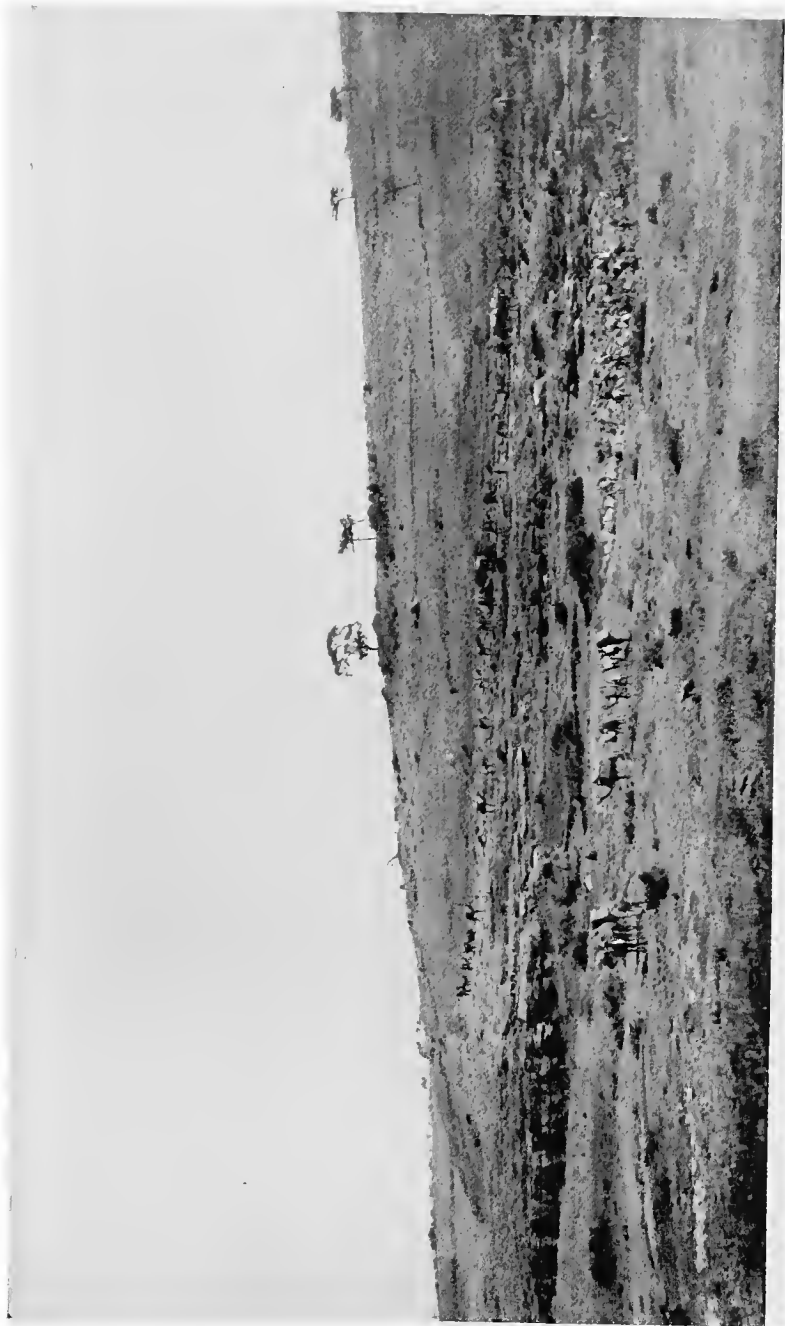
‘I appreciate this more than anything you could give me. It is the proudest decoration I could possibly own. I shall ask the Emperor for the right to accept it, as we cannot accept anything of this sort without authorization, and he will say “yes.” Then I shall wear it about my shoulders every feast-day.’

The forefathers thought, I suppose, when they wrote the American Constitution, that then, for the first time, organic law prevented the acceptance of honours and titles from abroad without the consent of the governing power ; but as a matter of fact the ancient empire of Abyssinia has been doing the same thing for a thousand years, more or less.

At Baltchi communication by telephone was had with M. Léon Chefneux, the able foreign adviser or Counsellor of State of the Emperor. M. Chefneux’s cordial manner increased our desire to hurry on to the capital. It was agreed that we should camp, after leaving Baltchi, at Chaffee Dunsä and Akaki, and thence proceed to Shola—a spring just this side of Addis-Ababa, where M. Chefneux himself and the receiving party would come out to meet us.

Having now reached Baltchi, our contract with the Danakil camel-men terminated of itself, and they were paid off. These poor creatures called us their fathers and brothers, vowed eternal friendship, and offered to await our return. They would have spared us much inconvenience had they been willing to go on to the capital, as did the Arabians. They suffer so from cold in these rare regions, and the camels do so poorly, that in almost every case, as in our own, it is necessary to make a new contract for the short remaining journey with the local mule-men.

It was the business of Atto Paulos to find a con-



BETWEEN CHAFFEE DUNSA AND BALCHI—OUR CARAVAN UNDER WAY.





tractor capable of moving our chattels on to the capital ; but although ample notice had been given of our intended arrival, he had great difficulty in arranging matters. There were plenty of mules and plenty of men, and there was no dispute about terms, but there were a thousand reasons why we must not think of going at once. Poor Atto Paulos was in great distress of mind. He knew that the Emperor expected us on Friday, and that if we were prevented from arriving, he would certainly be held responsible, not only by ourselves, but by his imperial master. At eleven o'clock, when it seemed that we were farther from a settlement than ever, he came to me and advised my departure. This would have the effect of bringing the men to their senses. Furthermore, he would pledge his word that our effects would arrive at Chaffee Dunsa that night.

The word of Atto Paulos was made good, but it was seven o'clock before the final load was laid at Chaffee Dunsa. Our property came over the rolling prairies in picturesque disorder. Now it was a camel loaded with rattling tin cracker boxes, now a mule almost hidden under piles of canvas, or perhaps a little ass struggling with a cast-iron soldier's stove. Occasionally men bearing bundles of tent-poles would pass along. It was wonderful that with this extreme variety of man and beast charged with our possessions, and under no particular contract, we should come into our own and extract order out of chaos. But we did. Nothing was ever stolen that was of the slightest consequence. Good old-fashioned honesty is the rule in the empire of the King of Kings.

We had ridden all day across wonderfully rich country, well watered, but not particularly interesting.

The sun shone fiercely—it seemed to me even more so than in the desert lowlands—and the flies were maddening in their numbers and persistency. Up to this point we had had very little difficulty either with flies or other representatives of the insect tribes, but our troubles now began in earnest, and continued until the homeward journey was well under way. Those of us who had head-nets wore them, but it was a question which was the more disagreeable to endure—the attacks of the flies or the annoying obstruction of the head-nets. Towards evening it became very cold, which was not surprising, since we were now at an altitude of 7,386 feet, having steadily mounted since leaving Baltchi, which has itself the very respectable altitude of 5,828 feet. We camped at a short distance from the nearest village. The evening ‘hospitality,’ when it arrived, contained everything except what we needed most—firewood. I gave the Slave of the Holy Ghost a thaler, and sent him out to buy fuel at any price. He returned, followed by some villagers, carrying bundles of sticks enough to cook our evening meal; but he handed back the thaler, which had no purchasing power in that country. On the plains of Chaffee Dunsä the coin of the realm is unknown, their circulating medium being cartridges for small purchases and bars of salt for large ones.

The recognised medium of exchange in the centres of Abyssinia is the Maria Theresa thaler of 1780, or the thaler of Menelik. The Maria Theresa thaler circulates generally throughout Africa, and is minted in Austria in considerable quantities for this trade, the new coins always bearing the old date. It is only within the last few years that Menelik has succeeded in bringing into common use coins bearing his own

effigy, stamped for him in Paris, from the silver representing the war indemnity paid by the Italians a number of years ago. Even at this time the ordinary Abyssinian scrutinizes his Maria Theresa thaler with great care, declining it if the minute pearls in the necklace are worn, and looking even more askance at the coins of his own country. The domestic coin is making its way, however, its circulation being encouraged by the Government, which regards its use as good public policy, tending to unify the empire. The subsidiary coinage consists of halves, quarters, eighths, and sixteenths of a thaler. All these coins have been introduced by the Emperor Menelik, and are much less commonly circulated than the thalers. Even in Addis-Ababa bars of salt and cartridges represent the divisions of the thaler. The amouli, or salt bar, is accepted at the rate of one-third to one-fifth of the thaler, and the cartridges at one-sixteenth. The thaler itself fluctuates in value from frs. 2·30 to frs. 2·45, the higher price prevailing at the greater distance from the sea. While the fluctuations are controlled by the silver market of the world, there is also a rapidly-varying domestic fluctuation, caused by crop movements and similar causes. All of our native servants carried well-filled cartridge belts, whether they happened to possess a gun or revolver or not. We at first deemed this to be a sort of vanity, but it was the recognised way of carrying a currency always sure to circulate.

A cold, uncomfortable night at Chaffee Dunsä was further disturbed by the capers of a regiment of monkeys which seemed not merely to be talking us over, but to be jumping about from tent to tent. We were glad when the sun rose on the following morning,

and we could set forth again upon the monotonous plains. *En route* a messenger met us. He had come all the way from the capital with a note from M. Chefnieux, confirming the arrangements respecting the reception the next day, for which preparations were then making.

After a hard day's work we reached a deep ravine, and failing to see the bridge a short distance below, forded a rather swift stream and camped upon the opposite side. Midway above our heads the rocks jutted out from the rich earth and were pierced by caves, in which, at certain periods of the year, the shepherds live. We encamped upon the domain of the Empress Taitu, so we were told when the 'hospitality' arrived. We had been expected to camp on the other side.

'But it shall make no difference,' explained the chief of the 'hospitality' reassuringly. 'You shall get your supplies just the same.'

The details concerning the 'hospitality' were discussed by our Ethiopian friends from the hilltops of the opposite sides of the valley, a distance of probably half a mile. The carrying power of the Ethiopian voice, and the desire of the owner of the organ to exercise it at long range, are something remarkable. The voices in themselves seem not especially resonant. The approved method of conversation is to begin at a low register, and gradually to work up, culminating each long-distance sentence with a final falsetto shriek.

There was a general overhauling of clothing at Akaki that night, for we were to say farewell to khaki, and appear before the Emperor on the morrow.

When we rose on Friday morning, December 18, there seemed to be every prospect of a rainy day.

Providence smiled upon us, as usual, however, and our mending, burnishing, and polishing went on. Even the servants tingled with pleasurable excitement, and from bags and bundles which we had not supposed in their possession drew forth fresh white chammas, or other signs of Abyssinian elegance. Alassman came out in a new khaki suit, with a tall white collar, which he wore outside his coat, and upside-down. One Abto Salassé had treasured his wide-brimmed felt hat to such an extent that upon his 300-mile tramp he had carefully protected it by placing there-upon the pasteboard box in which the hatter had packed it. He laid aside the box this day, and wore the hat alone. He also wore a short seersucker vest, and an immense scimitar, with which he cut grass in the evenings for his mules. Our own men put on their blue clothes, pipe-clayed their white helmets, and polished their brass buttons. The jack-tars created the greatest sensation by donning for the first time their blue sailor clothes, flat hats and ribbons. We civilians reserved ourselves until later in the day. We had but a short run ahead of us, one or two hours, so the start was deferred until almost ten o'clock. Scarcely had we reached the plain above our camping-place than we saw in the far distance the shining roofs of Addis-Ababa. The scenery was grand; high mountains were on both sides and ahead of us, and we marched between fields of waving grain.

A disturbing incident now occurred. Until a day or two before, a young Abyssinian had been travelling with us, profiting by the security which our numbers afforded in order to cross the desert. He had been particularly polite, and we all liked him. Shortly before reaching Akaki he had ridden on ahead, saying

that he was impatient to see his family, and that he would return to escort us into the city. We now saw him return, as he had promised. After exchanging salutations, he said that we should by all means camp where we were.

‘The reception is not to take place to-day, after all,’ he said. ‘The Emperor has left the city, to select mules for the army. I saw him last night myself, and he told me to let you know informally as soon as possible. You must camp here. If you should go on to Shola, you would be in sight of the capital, and to remain there and not to be received might seem to be a way of reproving His Majesty.’

It was a great disappointment to learn that the reception had been postponed, but the statement of the young Abyssinian was so circumstantial and plausible that we all accepted it as true. Fortunately, his advice to go on no further was not heeded. Inasmuch as I had a definite engagement to meet M. Chefneux at Shola, which had not been countermanded, I determined under no circumstances to fail him. We pressed on, therefore, and, as events proved, the young Abyssinian’s story was simply a tissue of untruths. His real purpose was never disclosed, but his object clearly was to induce us to break our engagement to be at Shola at noon, and consequently to fail to be received by a waiting Emperor. The latter, very naturally, would have been angered against guests who could use him with so little consideration.

## CHAPTER VIII

We are received by the Emperor—The Abyssinian band plays 'Hail, Columbia'—The palace of the Ras Oualdo Gorghis.

THE caravan proceeded to Shola, where an excellent spring, a large tree, and a beautiful prairie combined to make an ideal camping-ground. We had been somewhat disconcerted by the news brought by the little Abyssinian gentleman, but determined to await developments. Orders were issued to erect two tents only, for reception and dining room purposes, with the expectation of then pressing on to the city, unless the reports concerning the Emperor's intention not to receive us that day should be confirmed. The work of organizing a camp had scarcely been commenced, when M. Léon Chefneux, Counsellor of State to the Emperor, was announced. M. Chefneux came with a considerable escort of fine-looking Ethiopians; he himself was in the conventional garb of a Parisian. He immediately dispelled all our illusions with respect to the reception. There was no question of adjourning the ceremony at all. His Majesty awaited us with impatience, and the formal entry into the capital would take place at two o'clock.

In regard to the personality of M. Chefneux, it is enough to say, for the moment, that he enjoys with M. Alfred Ilg, at that time in Europe, the honour

of being the Emperor's adviser in foreign affairs. M. Chefneux remained to lunch with me, explaining in the meantime the nature of the coming reception, and stating that the palace of the Ras Oualdo Gorghis had been put in order, and was ready for our occupancy. It seemed that every detail respecting our welfare had been considered by our imperial host, whose forethought was such that if any lingering doubt remained concerning the warmth of the welcome awaiting us it was immediately laid aside.

I remitted my credentials to M. Chefneux, whose unaffected simplicity of manner and unfailing kindness manifested themselves then, as they did thereafter. In an empire permeated with the spirit of intrigue it was a satisfaction to be in the presence of a man of affairs, accustomed to dealing with a business proposition in a businesslike way. I told M. Chefneux during our first interview how long we could remain in the capital, and still meet our engagement to be at the coast in January, and he at once assured me, and made good the assurance, that no unnecessary delay would attend the negotiations. We had been warned previously by Europeans that the Ethiopian Government, even though animated by the best of intentions, would detain us, on one pretext or another, for months, and that we might as well resign ourselves to the situation first as last. It is worth while noting that our mission was accomplished in nine days, or in one day less than the maximum period which we had allowed ourselves for this purpose.

The luncheon at Shola concluded, there was another furbishing of uniforms on the part of those who had them, the civilian Commissioner and his staff putting themselves into dress clothes. Some well-meaning





MEMBERS OF THE ESCORT.



friends had previously suggested the effectiveness of a self-assumed uniform as properly befitting this occasion ; indeed, precedents were quoted. However, the shadow of Benjamin Franklin loomed up before us, and we adhered rigidly to the spirit and the letter of the statute. Old Atto Joseph's advice at Djibouti was good : ' We prefer to see you as you are, rather than trying to be like ourselves.' Indeed, after a brief experience among Oriental people, fond of display in every form, I am fully convinced that the old American doctrine in favour of dignity without ostentation can be made to respond to any public service as satisfactorily, if not more so, than belated attempts to imitate the gawdy externals to which our laws and traditions are equally opposed. Indeed, I am not sure that our shiny silk hats were not more effective than any other article of costume worn that day. They were certainly a novelty in Addis-Ababa. During our sojourn at the capital I was told that one of the provincial Kings had requested of a distinguished European traveller, as the most precious gift which he could receive, the silk hat which the latter had brought from Paris. The King wore the hat thereafter on State occasions, but only after having sent it to the Court jeweller, who surrounded the rim with a row of emeralds.

We mounted our mules at two o'clock, and moved slowly in the direction of the city. Before much progress had been made, a large escort of cavalry and foot soldiers could be discerned in the distance coming towards us. When the two parties met, the Ded-jazmatch, or General in command, dismounted, and introductions followed. The escorting troops then wheeled and moved on in advance, giving us an

opportunity to inspect them at leisure. Dr. Pease, who had been the year before at Cairo, remarked that the gorgeous splendour of the procession which started with the sacred carpet to Mecca was as nothing compared to this. Our escorting column grew rapidly as we approached the city, so that before we reached the ravine, which seems to mark the entrance to the capital proper, we were preceded by an army of 3,000 men.

They marched in most extraordinary confusion—surrounding their chiefs, suddenly performing some evolution, sometimes walking their horses and sometimes galloping. One could readily comprehend that the disorder was apparent and not real, that at the word of command these men could be controlled absolutely. No picture and no description can do justice to the beauty of the spectacle. No two costumes were alike. Saddles and bridles were decorated with gold and silver fringe, bucklers of burnished gold and silver were carried, and from the shoulders of these warriors flew mantles of leopard and lion skins, of silk, satin, and velvet. They were picked men, riding well, their chammas flying in the wind. Only the bright rifle barrels marked the difference between these Ethiopians and the army of their forbears who followed the Queen of Sheba when she went down into Judea. We were spellbound by this moving mass of colour, across which floated the weird music of a band of shawm-players, playing now as they had played when Jericho fell. With the probable emotions of the Yankee at the Court of King Arthur, we approached the throne of the King of Kings.

Having entered the outskirts of the city, we now



THE EMPEROR AND HIS SUITE ENTERING THE ADERACH.



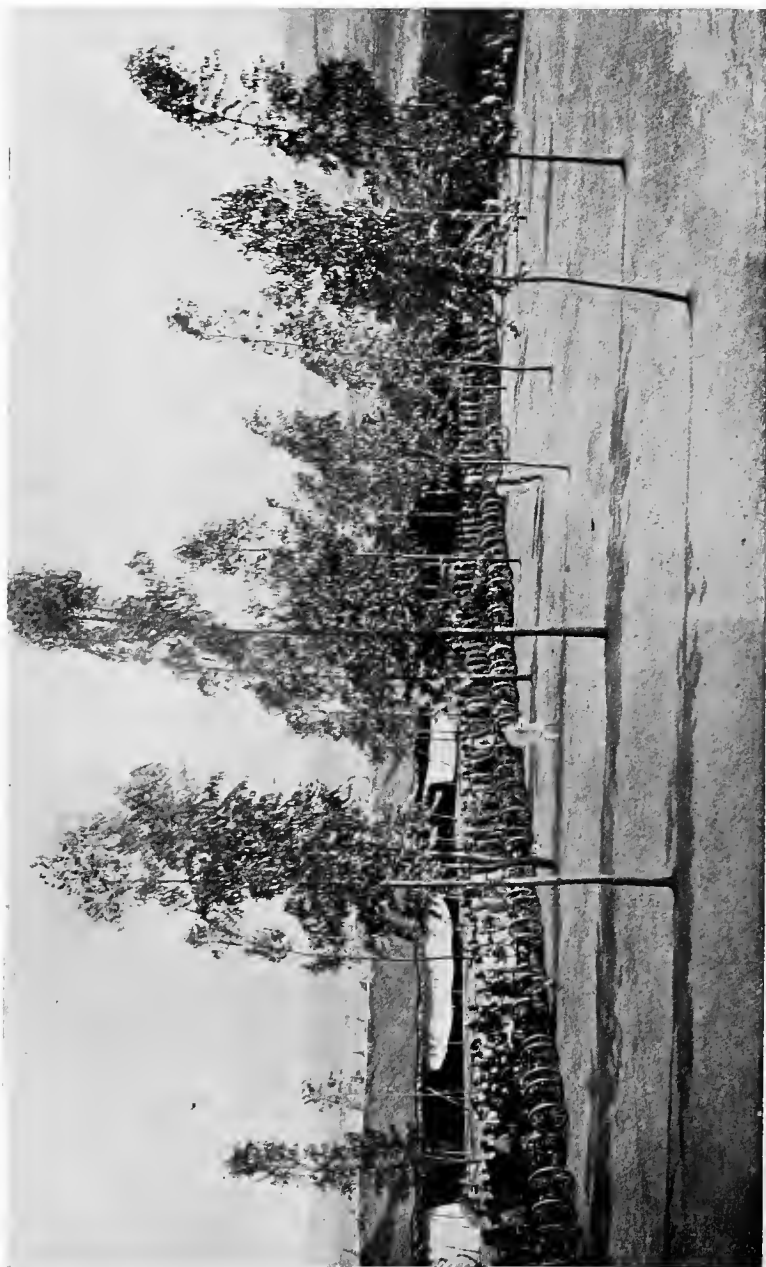
found ourselves travelling over one of the smooth and well-built roads with which Menelik is introducing modern civilization. In the city we found many miles of these roads. The crowds became much denser as we neared the palace. We climbed steadily higher, as the Emperor's palace occupies the crest of a hill and dominates the whole city. The Guebi, as the group of imperial buildings is called, is surrounded by a thatched stone wall, and everything about the premises conveys an impression of order and thrift. The palace and garden surprised us by their great superiority to anything which we had previously seen in the way of native construction. We passed through a number of courtyards, then across a spacious campus, in the background of which a troop of artillerymen stood by the guns captured from the Italians during the recent war, whence they saluted us. A Swiss officer was in command of this troop, who, after saluting in military fashion, removed his cap and bowed to the ground. His men wore uniforms of dark brown cotton cloth, and constitute the only body of regularly European-trained troops in the Ethiopian army. Upon reaching the wide doorway of Indian design, we dismounted and prepared to enter.

Once within, we discovered the *aderach*, or audience-hall, to be a large, half church-like structure, the roof of which was supported by pillars of timber, the cathedral-like aspect of which was enhanced by the presence of the throne at the opposite end. The floor was completely carpeted with Oriental rugs, incongruously mixed with the products of French and German looms. Back of the lines formed by the pillars on either side were massed hundreds of the

chief people of Addis-Ababa, garbed like the soldiers in many-coloured raiment, and waiting in respectful silence.

In the farther end of the chamber sat the Emperor upon his divan, or throne. The divan was placed upon a platform extending entirely across the audience-hall and under a canopy supported by four gilded columns, the gift of the French Republic. On each side of the throne stood two young Princes holding guns, and back of it, and extending on both sides until they merged into the crowds waiting in the aisles, stood the Ministers, judges, and officers of the Court. A subdued light softened the colours and blended them harmoniously. Our small column, both officers and men, advanced halfway across the wide and empty space, where the officers bowed. In complete silence the procession continued on to the elevation upon which the throne stood. Here the party, other than the Commissioner, halted, the latter stepping forward to shake hands in the most friendly and informal manner with the Emperor, who held out his own hand and smiled cordially. M. Sourvis, the official interpreter and private secretary of the Emperor, facilitated the exchange of conversation. His Majesty wore the costume familiar to us from photographs. He sat in Oriental fashion, his legs crossed and his arms supported on two cushions. He wore a red velvet mantle, barely disclosing the snowy white under-garments, and around his head a white handkerchief was closely bound. He also wore diamond eardrops, and several rings upon both hands. His face was full of intelligence, and his manners those of a gentleman as well as a King. Distinctly, the first impression was agreeable.





*Photograph by M. Bertolini.*

GUNS TAKEN BY THE ABYSSINIANS AT ADOWA.



After a short formal address, the Commissioner presented his Commission from the President, which the Emperor scrutinized with polite indifference, laying it aside at once and replying to my address in a few words. He spoke in the Amharic language, all the other conversations and translations being in French. He talked in a low conversational tone, and made no pretence whatever of taking into his confidence the large number of subjects listening on every hand. The officers of the mission were then presented, whereupon it became the Commissioner's pleasant privilege, as the first public act consequent upon the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, to present an invitation to the Emperor to participate in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. For this purpose, Governor Francis, President of the Exposition Company, had had prepared a handsome silver salver of large size, in the centre of which was engraved a form of invitation. The Emperor was evidently surprised and pleased, though not too much so to accept the invitation immediately, saying that the details could be discussed later on. Someone had told me at Diré-Daouah that the Emperor was a man of quick decision, but I scarcely anticipated such prompt action as this. It was characteristic of him, however, as during subsequent interviews he was equally rapid in seizing a point and determining his own line of action. I deeply regretted, as did the Emperor, I think, that in the end the time at his disposition made it materially impossible to organize a satisfactory exhibit at St. Louis.

The first formalities concluded, all the officers were asked to take chairs, and to engage in as much

friendly conversation as was possible with 2,000 spectators looking on with undisguised curiosity. His Majesty had that quality of responsiveness, however, which contributes to a flow of talk in spite of the most unfavourable surroundings, and I should not have believed that we had remained in the imperial presence forty minutes, if Dr. Pease had not insisted that it was so. The Emperor told us of the arrangements made for our comfort, and seemed especially solicitous that we should lack for nothing under this head. We separated with his promise to fix in writing an hour for a first private audience on the next day to be sent to our headquarters. The entire company assembled on this occasion waited with true Oriental courtesy until we had retired before dispersing. As we left the *aderach*, the captured cannon roared out twenty-one guns, and the band of the native musicians played 'Hail, Columbia,' and then the 'Marseillaise.' They played the 'Marseillaise' later on when they serenaded me. I have an idea that it was considered particularly appropriate, in view of my official residence in Marseilles.

The same immense escort which had led us into the city, headed by the same shawm-players, and augmented by the trained artillerymen and the Emperor's band, now led us down the mountainside, along the French road, and then across rough and stony tracks to the doorway of our temporary home. The generals, judges, and colonels, who had been so courteous to us all the afternoon, entered with the officers, and together we inspected the quarters of the Ras Oualdo Gorghis.

The Ras Oualdo Gorghis, an uncle of the Emperor and ruler of an outlying province, had erected this

palace for his own comfort, when he should have occasion to visit the capital and pay homage to his suzerain. An adobe wall, such as they build in Mexico, surrounded the large park, which was subdivided into numerous compounds. In the central compound stood the palace. The palace was probably 100 feet long by 80 feet wide, one story high, and divided into two rooms. The external walls were made of sun-dried bricks, such as we saw in process of manufacture as we approached from the Guebi. To produce these bricks, a round hole in the ground is excavated and filled with clay and water. A number of native labourers next enter it and tramp around in the muddy mass, working in a small quantity of hay, until it arrives at the proper consistency. Thereupon the bricks are moulded by hand, and laid out in the sun to dry.

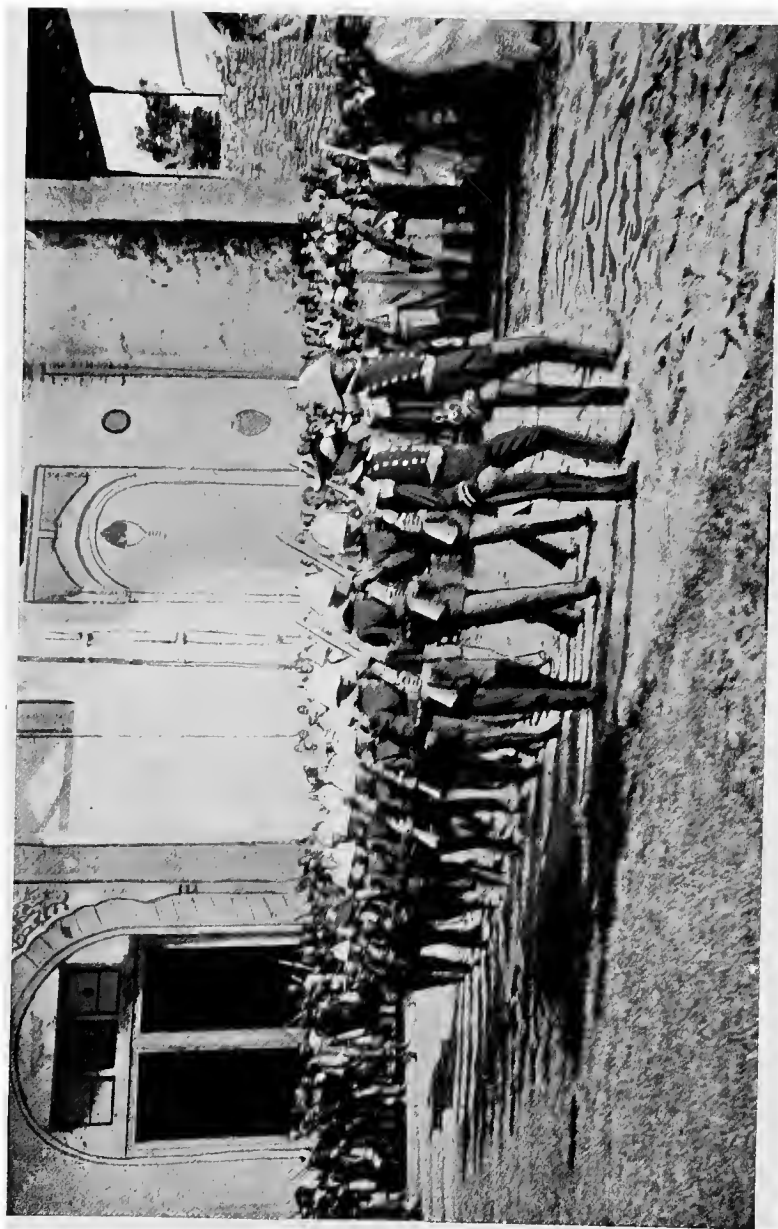
Our palace was oval in shape. There were several large doors and two windows in each room. The windows had solid wooden shutters, but no glass. Upon the floor were laid numerous Oriental rugs, and in the front-room was a divan, or throne, a long table, and many chairs. Portraits of the Emperor and of the Patriarch of Alexandria were upon the walls. After our tent life it all seemed quite sumptuous. The generals, judges, and colonels were as amiable as possible, and we became very good friends. Word had gone forth, in that mysterious manner by which news is carried in Africa, that this expedition had come with disinterested motives to exchange trade and to establish friendship. Frequently some of our most humble acquaintances would interject some comment about 'an alliance of friendship,' with favourable comment upon the absence from this

alliance of any discussion of frontiers or protectorates. I feel very sure that the real cordiality of the welcome which was extended to us in many obvious ways—quite apart from the external official demonstrations—arose from the popular conviction that American friendship had no dangers, and would be a source of moral strength to the nation.

The tired sailors and marines had a camp to make after the departure of our visitors. The tents were put up in the yard in front of the palace, and the flag was raised over 'Camp Roosevelt.' A large number of spectators had found their way into the grounds, and the soldiers' labours were beguiled by the music of the Emperor's band. A Russian political prospector, Count Leontieff, had brought the instruments out from Europe, and a European instructor had educated the musicians up to their present state of efficiency.

We had a late dinner that evening, and then, by the light of our 'fanous,' or candlesticks, read the papers which the courier had brought up from the coast. There we learned of the uprising in Panama, of the imminence of war in the Orient, and the results of the elections.

The officers made their sleeping quarters in the second room of the palace, where, well pleased with the welcome, and fatigued by the long and active day, they found greatly-needed rest.



AMERICAN PARTY RETIRING FROM THE ADERACH.





## CHAPTER IX

The strenuous life—Language peculiarities—Official society and its charms.

THE second day at the capital was almost as strenuous as the first. The Emperor had given me an appointment for ten o'clock for the purpose of talking over business matters informally. M. Chefneux came to escort me to the Guebi, and half of the guard accompanied us. The proprieties in Abyssinia require that every gentleman, native or foreign, shall never leave his quarters without an armed escort. It is the most onerous condition of life in the capital, but should certainly be encouraged by the manufacturers of fire-arms. The informal audience took place in a small chamber, approached by a broad flight of stairs, enclosed on three sides. A divan awaited its royal occupant, who entered quietly and promptly, accompanied by a number of doubtless important personages. The latter disappeared at a given signal, when the details of the proposed treaty were broached.

The Emperor was amazed when I handed him a project of treaty written in his own language by Professor Littmann, of Princeton University. Professor Littmann is probably the only man in the United States familiar with Amharic. At that time he had not visited the country, but as this book goes to press,

has just returned from a protracted scientific mission to Axum. A few days later I was able to present the Emperor with a copy of Professor Littmann's edition of the Amharic chronicle of the reign of Theodorus. The project of treaty served its purpose, as it enabled the Emperor to grasp our intentions immediately, without the intervention of an interpreter. He said that it was remarkable that a man who had had only the opportunities for study afforded by books should have such a command of the language as Professor Littmann. Eventually the treaty was recast and couched in shorter terms, but the original draft was perfectly clear and grammatically correct, except as to one or two points which illustrate the limitations of the Amharic language. For example, Professor Littmann had translated literally the English phrase, 'This treaty shall remain in force.' The word 'force' as here used conveys in Amharic only the impression of power. It is an exceedingly literal tongue.

In speaking of this Amharic draft of the treaty, Professor Littmann had previously said to me: 'There are many terms in the English original which are not to be found in the Amharic dictionaries. I have tried to circumscribe them as best I could. Now, it is likely that some of them do not exist in the Amharic language as used in Abyssinia itself, and that synonymous expressions not exactly the same as given in my translation are actually used. I would therefore advise you to test whether the Amharic expressions are really understood by the Abyssinians as the English prototypes.'

To return to my interview with the Emperor Menelik. He knew of our war with Spain, he knew something of our war with Great Britain, and he had a realization, though vague, of our might and power.



ONE OF THE BUILDINGS OF THE GUEBI.



His thirst for information is phenomenal. Europeans in the East, where newspapers are scarce and slow in coming, fall back upon a very useful institution called 'Reuter's.' Reuter's is a news-gathering concern, whose brief telegrams are sent out to those able to afford this luxury. They come in typewritten sheets, and are usually to be seen at the hotels and clubs of the sea-coast cities. When a week's despatches have accumulated, they are sent by the mail-boat from Aden to Djibouti, whence they are reforwarded to Diré-Daouah. Here all the English is put into French, and the important facts are immediately telephoned to Addis-Ababa, the longer despatches following by courier, to be translated into Amharic for the delectation of the Emperor.

His Majesty speaks no language but Amharic, unless, perhaps, one or two of the local dialects. He doubtless recognises a number of the commonly-used French expressions, and on the day when we left the city he paid us a delicate compliment by saying in English, 'How do?' He has always at hand a very competent interpreter, who is also his private secretary, M. Sourvis, a Greek gentleman who speaks French, Spanish, Italian, and English. Our conversations were invariably carried on in French as between the interpreter and myself; indeed, French is the only foreign tongue one hears much in Ethiopia. It was surprising to find in a country where English political influence was so predominant so little of that language. There are no English merchants in the empire, although there are hundreds of Frenchmen scattered throughout the country. Many of the natives have a smattering of French, and servants seem to pick it up more readily than they do English.

Either business interviews with the Emperor himself or exchanges of views with his responsible Ministers took place daily. In the meantime these meetings afforded me several opportunities to talk with His Majesty about many things. He had heard, evidently, a good deal about the President, whose personality interested him much. He knew him to be a sportsman, and hoped that he would one day visit Ethiopia. He wanted to know his age, and how he had come to be President. He wanted to know the length of our great rivers, the altitude of our cities, and he seemed to classify the great variety of facts which he has the habit of thus absorbing, and to bring them out again whenever occasion required.

I have read frequently that Menelik regards the presence of European legations in Addis-Ababa as an indirect acknowledgment of a sort of overlordship on his part, just as the Chinese are presumed to regard the presence of Ministers in the Flowery Kingdom as a public recognition of their superior civilization. This belief is quite unfair to the Ethiopian and to the Emperor. It is doubtful whether any practical statesman, certainly none labouring under the disadvantages of the Emperor Menelik, has any keener appreciation of the relative forces of the earth. He has heard of Japan, and in his own way is trying to emulate that striking example. The new railroad, the new highways, the bridges, the telephones—all these things he probably cares very little for in themselves, but he realizes that nations must advance or they must fall. He wishes to lift his people up to the point of being able to comprehend and utilize these modern improvements and inventions, and to turn

them to their own advantage, for the defence of their country and their national liberty.

The entire American mission, in gala attire, devoted that first Saturday afternoon to making a round of calls which inclination and propriety required to be made. First there were the Italian, Russian, French, and British Legations to be visited; then the Abouna, or head of the Church; Dedjazmatch Abata, the General who had escorted us into the city; M. Chefneux, the Counsellor of State; and M. Sourvis, the Emperor's secretary. After making several of these calls, and groping with difficulty homeward in the darkness of the Abyssinian night, with no friendly moon to show the way, we appreciated that Washington could no longer be called the city of magnificent distances.

Addis-Ababa is a new city, not more than a dozen years old. The former capital was the ancient city of Gondar. It has a permanent population of some 50,000 souls, including probably 200 Europeans. Aside from the Emperor's palace, the Legations and the homes of a few Europeans, all the buildings are decidedly primitive. They consist, as a rule, of a round lattice-work frame, against which mud is thickly plastered, and of thatched roofs. The Legations have all been object-lessons of the greatest value to the community, for the builders, instead of undertaking to erect European structures, have produced glorified forms of the native architecture.

In the absence of Captain Harrington, Major Ciccodicola, who has been in Ethiopia since the war of 1896, is dean of the diplomatic corps. His Legation grounds are approached by an excellent macadamized road, which extends far beyond his official premises. The Italian colours float from a

tall mast, and a native guard uniformed in Italian cloaks and Piedmontese hats salute arriving visitors. The house is large and comfortable, consisting of a series of main buildings connected by galleries, which we were not enabled to enter upon this occasion, as the Minister was at the Russian Legation.

Better fortune awaited us at the home of the head of the Church. The Abouna, or spiritual head of the Church, is an Egyptian. He is always named by the Patriarch of Alexandria, who receives a present of 12,000 thalers each time he nominates a new Abouna. The Abouna is doomed to pass his remaining days in Abyssinia, unless specially dispensed by the Emperor. This has occurred in the case of the present ecclesiastical chief, who was permitted by Menelik to visit Russia a year or two ago. It appears to be the policy of the Government to maintain the Church in all its vigour, and to this end to contribute to the prestige of the Abouna. The distinguished Churchman was in his garden, under a red silk umbrella, and wearing a large broad-brimmed hat, when we called, but he returned to his reception-room to receive us, seated upon a divan not unlike a throne. He wore a purple silk robe, and was a man of distinguished face and figure. Turkish coffee was served, and we spoke of many things, after which the garden was visited, one of the finest in the country. I have no doubt that the American seeds which we afterwards sent to the Abouna have long since contributed to his success as a horticulturist.

The Russian and British Legations are a long distance from the city, and very attractive when once reached. To arrive, however, is an experience quite as exciting in its way as a chase after the hounds.



Diplomatic society had been celebrating the saint's day of the Emperor of all the Russias when we arrived, and though most of the guests had departed, we were still in time to drain a glass to the Czar, and to M. Leschine his Minister, whose personal cordiality and hospitality left ineffaceable impressions upon our minds. The Russian establishment in Addis-Ababa is the most considerable of all the foreign undertakings. Aside from the Legation proper, it includes a free hospital, pharmacy, and staff of physicians and trained nurses. The utility of this work to the native population is very real, and to the few European residents the mere knowledge of the existence of this splendid institution is very reassuring. The influence obtained by Russian diplomacy operating along medical lines is necessarily immense. A small guard of Cossacks gives the touch of the picturesque required to make the Legation as interesting as it is useful.

Having encountered Mr. Clerk, the British Chargé d'Affaires, at the Russian Legation, our visit to his official home was deferred until Christmas, which was celebrated with all the traditional dishes, from turkey and roast beef to plum-pudding. Minister Harrington was absent, as I have before mentioned, but was then on his way to his post.

We found our General, or Dedjazmatch, of the day before in the midst of a camp of several thousand small white tents, not far from the Russian Legation. We paid him our compliments and hurried on, as night was rapidly overtaking us, and we had still the Legation of France and the homes of M. Chefneux and M. Sourvis to visit. But, alas for good intentions, we were too late. M. Roux, the French Chargé d'Affaires, and the other gentlemen we had to meet

on another day and under other circumstances. M. Lagarde, the French Minister, was in France during our sojourn in the capital, reaching Djibouti a day or two after we had sailed.

What our diplomatic friends may have thought of the American mission considered politically may have been favourable or unfavourable; in any event they certainly contributed memorably to the personal pleasure of our visit by a boundless hospitality which ceased only when we went away, and after having assembled us as guests under the flag of every nation represented officially in Ethiopia. We ate caviare and drank vodka with M. Leschine, macaroni and Asti spumanti with Major Ciccodicola, foie gras and champagne with M. Roux, and roast beef and port with Mr. Clerk. It filled us with a new respect for diplomacy as a profession and fine art to discover how these gentlemen had surrounded themselves with comfort and even luxury in that far-away spot.

We met much the same friends on all of these festal occasions, and learned to like them better from day to day. It is surprising how quickly new friendships can form, and how soon the formality of purely official acquaintance can break down, near the equator, and 300 miles from a railroad.

I learned with sorrow in 1906, while revising these pages, of the death of the Russian Minister, M. Leschine, in his far-away post, where he served his country honourably and well.

## CHAPTER X

Ethiopian politics—Rôle of America, Italy, France, Great Britain, and Russia—The Ambassadors of civilization and their railroad:

THE rôle of the various Legations in Addis-Ababa is purely political. The American mission was the only one based upon purely commercial considerations which Menelik had received up to the date of our arrival. Of course, numerous private and semi-official missions have visited him, with certain specific objects in view; but America was the first country to establish diplomatic relations for the avowed purpose of protecting and extending commerce, and without a political issue of any character to discuss. It will be said, perhaps, that the ultimate aim of all the European Powers is to promote commerce, and that it is only for the purpose of promoting commerce that colonies are established and official relations maintained. This may be perfectly true in principle, but in practice, at least, the matter of frontiers, balance of power, and kindred questions, are so far in the foreground that the ultimate commercial ambition is entirely overshadowed. The purposes and interests of the United States in Ethiopia are so patent without definition that they may be dismissed with a few words.

Waiving all regard for the probably important

future of Ethiopia as a consuming nation, we had enjoyed for years a trade in certain of our goods, notably cottons, more valuable than any other import trade in the empire. To reach these customers of ours, our merchandise had to cross either British, French, or Italian soil. The frequently abused missionary had gone into Africa many years before present political conditions prevailed, and had introduced some of our honest American cotton goods with the success above stated. This was a trade in which no American houses were directly engaged, but the benefits thereof were no less directly enjoyed by the American farmers and working men. Then came the partition of Africa by the European Powers into spheres of influence, the creation of Custom-houses, and all those administrative measures whereby trade is made to follow the flag. The French took hold of Madagascar, and as abruptly as Napoleon announced that the House of Braganza no longer reigned in Europe, our long-enjoyed cotton trade ceased to be. In the Congo Free State, where cotton sheetings are still known as 'Americani,' the merchandise was now coming in fact from Belgium. Then our British friends, whose shibboleth is Free Trade, had in fact extended special privileges to their own manufactures in many of their colonies, creating conditions which made American transactions difficult of accomplishment. The methods by which this had been done were no doubt perfectly legitimate, but none the less effectual for all that. There remained to our credit, however, in spite of the unfavourable conditions which had gradually been created elsewhere, the coveted export business in cottons, known as the 'Red Sea trade.' The greater

part of this was in Abyssinia, where it amounted to a monopoly.

Our business in Abyssinia had grown up under shadowy political arrangements, when the Abyssinians had claimed an outlet upon the sea, and which the Egyptians had contested with them by force of arms. In our time the Abyssinians had been forced back, land-locked like Switzerland, with Italy, France, and England standing guard upon the Red Sea. Our trade filtered across the Gulf of Aden, and thence by caravan across British Somaliland and into Ethiopia. Then came the active occupation of the French possession by the keen-witted Gaul, the creation of the port of Djibouti, and the building up of the railroad from that point into Ethiopia. The line was put into operation during the summer of 1903. Plainly, the camel could not compete as a common carrier with the French locomotive. It seemed perfectly well assured that the trade route to Abyssinia over British soil from Aden to Zeilah, and thence to Harrar, must give way ultimately to the more advantageous one from Djibouti into the interior. No spirit of prophecy seemed necessary to perceive that the forces now at work for the development of Ethiopia were, at least, not being created for the furtherance of American commercial ambition. It seemed a perfectly obvious business proposition that the United States Government should look into this field, where we had an actual interest of no mean importance, and defend it by the simple process of procuring a treaty which should guarantee to our people equal treatment in respect to trade conditions. We wanted to get more trade if we could, but by all means, and with no matter how much reasonable effort, to retain for ourselves such trade as

we had. We had had no official relations with the empire of Ethiopia ; it remained the one spot upon the globe where a powerful government exercised authority over some millions of subjects recognised as free and independent, and had absolutely no point of contact with our own. It is difficult to find any large centre of international trade in these times where the American Government has not at least a consular agent to whom we may look for assistance and information. It was an incongruous and irregular condition, and one which required correction. To investigate and report upon the trade possibilities of Ethiopia, to safeguard our existing interest by the negotiation of a commercial treaty—these were the motives which had prompted the organization of the American mission, and concerning our policy we had nothing more to disclose, and nothing whatever to conceal.

The Italians have been represented in one way and another in Ethiopia for many years. The early history of Italian-Abyssinian diplomacy is very complicated reading. War broke out between the two Powers in 1896, and after the disaster to Italian arms, Major, then Captain, Ciccodicola was entrusted with the delicate and difficult mission of recreating Italian prestige. No one who has visited Ethiopia has failed to note the success attending Major Ciccodicola's efforts. At the time of our visit he was directing the building of a telegraph line between Addis-Ababa and Massowah, the capital of the Italian coast colony. We had passed several immense camel trains, bringing up bridge trusses and other steel building material forwarded from Milan—these are among the tangible evidences of the vigorous efforts of the Italian Minister to worthily represent his country. He is a perfect



*Photograph by M. Bertolini.*

GENTLEMEN OF THE EMPEROR'S COURT.

102 I<sup>A</sup>  
to "





guide-book upon Ethiopia, and has offered many valuable suggestions bearing upon its present development. Major Ciccodicola told me of his attempt to replace American cottons with Italian sheetings. 'But while your people grow nearly all the world's cotton,' said he, 'how can we Italians expect to force you out?'

The French Legation has been directed for many years by M. Léon Lagarde, the first Governor of French Somaliland, and as such familiar with every political development in North-East Africa during the last twenty years. The French material interest in Ethiopia is more apparent than that of any other nation, and it concerns mainly at the present time the completion and operation of the railroad from the coast. Other international claims and pretences are more or less vague and remote; but the very patent fact is that, against all political opposition, financial difficulties, and the passive resistance of the lowland tribes, the railroad exists, and crosses French territory into Abyssinia. It is equally the fact that French business men are scattered throughout the Empire to a considerable extent. The growth of Djibouti as a port of transit depends directly upon the growth and development of Ethiopia. It is not necessary to inquire why the French settled themselves upon the Red Sea coast in order to perceive why they are very greatly concerned with the progress of Ethiopia to-day.

The British interests are in charge of Sir John L. Harrington, a young man, who has come up from the lower grades of administrative work in East Africa, notably as the agent of his Government in British Somaliland. Two-thirds of the Ethiopian frontier border upon British territory or Egyptian territory,

and it is easy to comprehend how these long imaginary lines may give rise to complicated questions requiring a strong hand and a steady head. British commercial interest in Ethiopia has not yet manifested itself strikingly, except in the form of considerable importations from British India, and in the presence in the country of numerous Indian traders, who are among the most active and successful business men of the empire.

We come now to the most interesting mission in Ethiopia, because it is the least comprehensible by the ordinary rules of interest which govern international relations. Our Russian friends have no apparent stake in Ethiopia—or at least that which modern society regards as such. There are no Russians in Ethiopia other than official Russians. There is no Russian trade in the country, and there are no Russian frontiers nearer than Turkestan. Yet the Russian mission presided over by the accomplished M. Leschine, the Minister, included a hospital and dispensary, together with doctors, nurses, and everything else, all of which Ethiopia enjoys without money and without price. It is said that some very strong sympathy exists between the Russian and the Ethiopian Churches. The Abouna was permitted to appear in the Russian Church as an ecclesiastic, and there is no doubt an analogy, if not a kinship, between the two religions. I fear that Europeans are somewhat sceptical, however, when it comes to regarding the religious bond as one which unites these two peoples diplomatically. If Ethiopia possessed a coast-line, it would be exceedingly easy to assume that Russia hoped sooner or later to obtain a Red Sea port ; but in the actual state of affairs no

such ambition can be entertained, except by the somewhat fanciful method of exchanging Russian influence in Ethiopia with some interested European Power in a position to give to the Czar's Government the presumably coveted Red Sea outlet. The real inwardness of Russian diplomatic effort in Ethiopia is a never-ending source of conversation in the empire, and many ingenious theories are spun regarding it, one of which is as valuable as another. Probably in what Pascal calls 'the research of the intention' the amateur in politics misses the true cause, in order to spin out theories which only the next forty years, or perhaps century, can demonstrate. Let us be reasonable, then, and assume that, Ethiopia being a Christian Power, now important, and likely to become more important, and ruled by wise men, it is a safe policy for Russia, as for any other great nation, both as a measure of prudence and a measure of courtesy, to maintain cordial relations with this Power. May not the mysteries of diplomacy, here as elsewhere, consist largely in the fact that there are no mysteries?

There are two other diplomats in Ethiopia, Ministers, not of European Powers, but of the greatest power upon the earth—modern civilization. These two Ministers are also official counsellors of the Emperor himself, and without some account of them no report concerning Ethiopia would be complete. These two men are Alfred Ilg and Léon Chefneux. The first is a Swiss and the second a Frenchman. Both have lived many years in the country, both have had faith in Menelik and sympathy with his people. M. Ilg I knew slightly from an acquaintance formed in France, and I regretted his absence on the occasion of our visit. He came into the country about 1877,

with two of his compatriots, having just left the famous polytechnical school of Zurich. The Emperor had sent for three competent men through a Swiss correspondent at Aden. At that time the Ethiopians were inclined to believe that Western superiority in the arts and trades resulted from certain formulæ or inexplicable cleverness rather than in consequence of patient scientific effort. M. Ilg was commanded to make His Majesty a pair of shoes. A wise man in his generation, and a Swiss, this able gentleman took apart an old pair of shoes for purposes of study, and succeeded in gratifying the Emperor's wish. The story goes that the Emperor thereupon desired to know if a rifle could be made from the resources of the country then and there.

'What is the use of trying?' replied M. Ilg. 'It would cost far more than a fine European rifle, and would be necessarily crude.'

The curiosity of the Emperor was persistent, and M. Ilg made the rifle. These were the awakenings of Menelik to an adequate conception of modern progress. With his extraordinary assimilative powers, he absorbed from the graduate of Zurich the education which has stood him in good stead in handling the ship of State. M. Ilg acquired his status as adviser and Minister, not alone by intelligence and zeal, but by an affectionate and appreciative loyalty to his chief.

M. Chefneux came into the country about the same time as M. Ilg. A French merchant, having been granted a concession for the agricultural exploitation of the Hawash valley, advertised for men capable of carrying on the enterprise. The company went to pieces before M. Chefneux, then a very young man,

had gotten farther than Obock on the coast. About this time another Frenchman, Paul Soleillet, sent down a cargo of arms, and finding young Chefneux upon the point of penetrating the country, proposed that he take a sample of the rifles to Menelik, then only the King of Choa. M. Chefneux took four rifles, armed as many natives, travelled by night and hid by day, and thus crossed the dangerous coast belt. Menelik agreed to purchase the cargo, and sent a caravan of ivory to the coast to pay for the shipment. Soleillet's principals thereupon refused to make delivery, and young Chefneux went on to Paris, where he procured from other sources the arms required. From that beginning he remained at the elbow of the Emperor, making common cause with M. Ilg for the aggrandizement of the Emperor's power and the development of his people.

An interregnum of Italian influence followed the first ten years of M. Chefneux's friendship. Thereafter both MM. Chefneux and Ilg, who had lost ground, were recalled to explain the meaning of the political conditions then existing. When the breach with Italy occurred, these two men, loyal to their adopted country, contributed immensely to the Emperor's fortunes, and have ever since remained his tried and true friends.

Next to the war with Italy, the most important modern event in Abyssinian history is the construction of the railroad from Djibouti to Diré-Daouah. It is the conception of both MM. Ilg and Chefneux. It was inevitable that two such intensely practical men should regard the connection of the inaccessible empire with the outer world as necessary, not only as an economical venture abundantly justified by the hidden

riches of Ethiopia, but as essential to the political salvation of the country, which must advance or which must fall, as have fallen all other empires whose rulers were unable to justify their lease of power. The Emperor followed them in their reasoning, and granted a concession for a period of ninety-nine years, commencing from the date of the first exploitation. The essential provision of the concession is that it carries with it the right to collect an *ad valorem* duty of 10 per cent. upon all merchandise entering or leaving the country, this tax to be reduced one-half whenever the net profits of the company shall amount to 2,500,000 francs, and to cease to exist when they attain 3,000,000 francs. It is further provided that when the company's net profits exceed 3,000,000 francs annually, the surplus above shall be divided between the company and the Ethiopian Government.

The railroad projectors met with every conceivable embarrassment in the construction of the first section of the line from Djibouti to Diré-Daouah. Indifference in France—for the railroad had to traverse the French colony—active opposition from the savage Issas of the desert, and chronic need of funds—these were the trials which would have discouraged any men less resolutely determined than Léon Chefneux and Alfred Ilg. Eventually, when private capital seemed to hesitate, it became necessary for the French Government to guarantee the bonds of the company.

The railroad was opened on January 1, 1903, from Djibouti to Diré-Daouah, a distance of 310 kilometres. The line is built upon a 1-metre gauge, with bridges and viaducts of iron and steel, and rolling-stock equal to that employed on European railroads of a secondary order, and the traffic is said to be increasing from

month to month. The company made what American railway managers would regard as a capital error in establishing at first exceedingly high freight rates. In a country where commerce, except in a very limited sense, does not exist, and where the ultimate success of the railroad as a business proposition must depend upon the creation of a non-existent trade, it was very necessary that the freight rates should be put down to a low level. Instead of so doing, the traffic managers established tariffs not seriously lower than those for which freight could be transported by camel. Under these circumstances, the up-country merchants found little encouragement, and the volume of business failed to increase in the proportions desired. Better counsels have prevailed, and even while the Americans were in Ethiopia the then prevailing traffic tariffs were materially modified, with beneficial results, and it is altogether probable that this enlightened policy will be put into effect to a still more marked degree as time goes on.

It will require three or four years to connect Addis-Ababa with the line already built, a distance of probably 300 miles. When this great enterprise is accomplished, Ethiopia will be in a position to convert her vast treasures of natural wealth into money, and to join her sister trading nations of the world. Until the completion of this enterprise she must remain interesting commercially only in anticipation, and politically as a remarkable historical fact. When the railroad is completed, we may reasonably expect to see the quickening to modern methods of a population of first-rate intelligence, intrinsically capable of meeting the competition of the Western world.

I once suggested to the Emperor that he send

some of his young men to our American schools and colleges.

‘Yes, that will come,’ said he; ‘our young men must be educated. We have much to do. We are a very primitive people.’

The remark was not without its significance. It showed a desire to see education spread, and it showed an entire absence of that self-sufficiency attributed by some writers to the Abyssinian nation. A recent English writer upon Abyssinia has said, speaking of their attributed immodesty: ‘It is no doubt remarkable that a nation of niggers possessing three hundred thousand rifles should take a tone different from that of niggers who are not permitted to possess any.’ This is a very harsh and unsympathetic way of dismissing a great people, but it reflects the spirit in which a large proportion of recent travellers have visited the country. The word ‘nigger,’ in its English sense, is bereft of that half-affectionate swing which it acquires in America, and it is meant to stamp with the seal of contempt the person to whom it is applied. In the case of the writer quoted, it showed an unwillingness to understand, and an inability to sympathize with, a race of men who have asked nothing of the world save to be left alone with their independence and their old civilization.

Though this may be the national aspiration, it has been fully recognised, I think, that further enlightenment is necessary to a perpetuation of that independence. If Menelik lives, he will very probably stimulate his young men to take an active interest in education, and to fit themselves for carrying on the work which he has begun. To-day the great obstacle to the education of Ethiopian youths in foreign col-



leges is the almost complete lack of proper rudimentary training. Exceedingly few persons are able to read or write. The schools seem unable to get beyond instruction in the Gospels, and to find proper material for an intellectual uplifting it will be necessary for students to take long preliminary courses in the most elementary studies.

‘It will come,’ said M. Chefneux, ‘but it will come slowly.’

## CHAPTER XI

### The Ethiopian problem.

THE concession under which the railroad from Djibouti to Diré-Daouah has been built was obtained when to the world at large Ethiopia was scarcely more than a mildly interesting geographical fact. It was dated March 9, 1894, prior to the disaster to Italian arms, prior to the victory of Kitchener at Omdurman, and before there was any general realization of the strategic or economic importance of the empire. The concession was granted to Alfred Ilg, who was authorized to organize a company under the name of the Imperial Railway Company of Ethiopia. It was provided that the system of railways in view should consist of three sections: The first from Djibouti to Harrar, the second from Harrar to Entoto, the third from Entoto to the White Nile. The first section is now built, and is in operation. It extends from Djibouti to Diré-Daouah, however, a new town one day's journey distant from Harrar. It is of capital importance to remember that the contract as signed, while it gave the concessionnaires the ultimate right to build and exploit the three lines described, stated in explicit terms that the immediate right to build extended only to the line from Djibouti to Harrar, and

added that 'no other company would be authorized to construct competing lines.' It was clearly the intention of the Emperor to have the first section, extending from the sea across French Somaliland, built and in operation before he should lay down the conditions for the completion of the other lines across his own territory. These facts have enabled rival interests to prevent the extension of the existing lines beyond Diré-Daouah, and have given rise to what is called the Abyssinian problem. The original concession has been confirmed several times, but for prudential reasons the Emperor has thus far failed to signify the conditions under which construction might proceed, and if from a legal point of view he may be regarded as free to establish these conditions, the actual cause of delay is the inability of the European Powers represented at Addis-Ababa to agree upon a practical plan of procedure.

If Messrs. Ilg and Chefneux had been in control of abundant means from the inception of the enterprise, it is altogether probable that their complete plans would have been carried out several years ago, to the great material advantage of the territory involved. Their fate has been that of many other strong-willed men, balked, but not defeated, by the timidity of others. They attacked their problem fearlessly; they found money, and they began to build across the desert long before diplomatic circles thought or cared about the subject. In fact, so indifferent were Governments, and particularly the French Government, which had most at stake, that when the original capital controlled by Messrs. Ilg and Chefneux had been absorbed, and when French capital hesitated, a British group, known as the International Ethiopian

Railway Trust and Construction Company, took shares and debentures to such an extent that it was feared for a time that control would pass by simple commercial process from French to British hands. Probably there would have been no great objection in France to such a transfer of interest, but for the underlying fear that, with French stockholders in the minority, the Anglicized company would build a short connecting-line from Diré-Daouah to Zeilah or Berbera in British Somaliland, thereby developing either of those ports at the expense of Djibouti. To defeat any such possibility, a campaign in the French newspapers and before French Chambers of Commerce followed, with the immediate object of securing from the French Treasury the financial support necessary to prevent the passing of control to British financiers. The pressure thus brought to bear effected the desired end. I think it is rather conceded now that the exigency which induced prompt action in France resulted in a convention which failed to take into consideration the point of view of the Emperor of Ethiopia. The convention referred to was signed on February 6, 1902, by officers of the Ethiopian Railway Company and the French colonial officers of the Somali coast. The contract provides that 'the Protectorate of the French Somaliland accords to the Imperial Ethiopian Railway Company a subvention of 500,000 francs, payable annually during fifty years from July 1, 1902. This subvention will be devoted exclusively to the guarantee of the loans to be obtained by the company for the payment of expenses limited by Article X. of the present convention. In consequence, the company constitutes as a gage to future creditors or lenders to assure payment of interest and sinking

fund the annual credits acquired by the company in virtue of the present convention.'

The financial assistance thus sought and obtained was granted in return for certain enumerated rights, which the railroad company had no power to confer, and which may be summarized thus :

Article V., paragraph 8, provides that neither the temporary nor definite cession of all or part of the lines conceded to the company between Djibouti and the Hawash valley, either by sale, lease, or otherwise, can take place except with the consent of the French Ministers for the Colonies and Foreign Affairs and Finance.

Article VI., paragraph 2, provides that no branch lines connecting with the main system between Djibouti and the Hawash valley may be constructed except with the authorization of the Ministers for the Colonies and Foreign Affairs. This provision is intended to prevent any possible connection with Zeilah or Berbera, and to guarantee that all Abyssinian commerce shall be drained through Djibouti.

Article IX., paragraph 3, provides that the French Legation in Ethiopia shall have control of measures looking to security and good order upon the lines exploited in Ethiopian territory.

Article XIV., paragraph 2, provides that upon the expiration of the concessionary period of ninety-nine years the French colony shall become automatically proprietor of the lines from Djibouti to Diré-Daouah, a considerable portion of which is on Ethiopian soil.

Article XV., paragraph 1, provides that after January 1, 1920, the French colony may acquire the concession covering lines from Djibouti to the Hawash valley.

Article XVI., paragraph 3, provides that upon the ex-

piration of the concession, the lines from Djibouti to the Hawash valley shall be confiscated.

The inability of the railway company to confer these privileges was tacitly recognised by Article XVIII., which declares that the paragraphs above shall be applicable 'under reserve as to an understanding between the French and Ethiopian Governments for the lines situated beyond French territory.' As before stated, the first branch of the railroad, from Djibouti to Diré-Daouah, is in operation to-day, and it is in operation because of the timely help of the French Government, and the company's concession or exclusive right to build the other branches is still perfectly valid. In the meantime the existing line, while a great convenience, is of comparatively little commercial importance, and this condition must persist until extensions are constructed into the rich producing regions of Abyssinia. From the point of view of the Ethiopian Government it is undesirable to permit the extension of the existing line by the Imperial Railway Company of Ethiopia, while that company is bound down by a contract whereby a foreign Power seeks to obtain contingent rights in a large part of the empire, and absolute control of the means of transportation. Therefore the Emperor has steadfastly refused to formulate the limitation clauses regarding the building of the additional lines, or to come to the understanding referred to in Article XVIII. above, and in this position is sustained by other Powers with political interests at stake.

Efforts have been made, and probably are now being made, to secure from France a waiver of the exclusive rights thus far acquired, and the substitution of some form of international control, but so far without

definite results. In the meantime the Emperor would very much like to see the railroad built. The *Colonial Dispatch* of May 18, 1905, in a report which I fully credit, declares that on April 11, 1905, the Emperor summoned the foreign representatives and railroad concessionnaires, to whom he complained that since three years work had ceased on the railroad, and that he could obtain no proposal reconciling international interests. He then threatened to put an end to the conflict by undertaking to construct the lines across the empire himself, 'without asking or accepting assistance from anyone.' The Emperor also said at this meeting that he was obliged to express his regrets at the continued existence of a convention into which the French company had entered in 1902 with the French Government, and in which his own supremacy was threatened. He had always looked upon the construction of the railroad as a commercial enterprise, and never expected it to become a political instrument in foreign hands. He spoke of his astonishment and displeasure when this agreement was submitted to him, and added that he had charged the French Minister to inform his Government that he disapproved of this convention.

The accuracy of the foregoing is largely confirmed in a report to the French Chamber of Deputies published in Annexe No. 2,661 of Parliamentary Documents for 1906, in which the following statements are made :

'After three years of effort the railroad company saw itself obliged to sell a large portion of shares upon the London market, and at the same time engaged a part of its bonds to guarantee loans proffered by British houses. Immediately the British holders syndicated themselves with the intention of

substituting themselves for the French company, and did not hesitate to avow that they pursued above all a political end. The President of the Trust, Lord Chesterfield, declared without subterfuge, to a general assembly, that his idea was to replace the French management by a British management, as this would result in the ruin of our port of Djibouti, and to the advantage of the neighbouring port of Berbera, situated in British Somaliland. Opinion in France becoming alarmed by this prospect, the public powers commenced to preoccupy themselves with the situation. Therefore, Parliament voted in February 1, 1902, a convention by which the Somaliland Protectorate was authorized to provide the railway company with a subvention of 500,000 francs during twenty-five\* years, and on its side the railway company undertook to disinterest foreign creditors, and to conform to certain prescribed conditions in the contract—that is to say, effective control by the State, right of pre-emption on the part of the French Government in case of cession or liquidation, etc. Unhappily, certain articles of the convention voted by Parliament aroused the suspicion of the Ethiopians. While a definite solution is being awaited, the railway company, which is in a precarious condition, continues to provide itself on the British markets, and the lenders increase their exigencies in proportion as the amount of their credits advances. Thus they have reached the point of dictating their will to the French group, and demand of the French society itself the internationalization of the railroad.

\* The period here named should read fifty years, according to the text of the official convention signed by the French Government.—R. P. S.



‘The railroad cannot remain French except by an accord with our rivals, to whom it should be easy for us to offer compensations, because they also possess in Ethiopia interests which we might contest. England desires to delimit the frontiers on the north-west, west, and south, and also desires the acquisition of a passage upon the high Ethiopian plateau for the railroad from the Cape to Cairo, which under the authorization of 1902 would follow the marshy lowlands. Italy desires to lose nothing of her economic advantages in the region, and should act willingly in accord with us when certain that we will respect those interests. Therefore there is nothing to prevent an understanding with our rivals, and even that we should give them a place in the management of the railroad provided that the administrative council of the company contains a French majority.’

In spite of the cheerful optimism of this report, the internationalization and the desired understanding with the Emperor’s Government have not been realized as I revise these lines in May, 1906. The Emperor has, on the other hand, taken a first step in execution of his threat to build the line himself if the international agreement could not be brought about, as I have been advised by several correspondents in Ethiopia that a large number of workmen are now being employed, and that the grading has been completed for a considerable distance from Addis-Ababa, the work proceeding towards Diré-Daouah. The Emperor himself is providing the labourers, and the work is proceeding under the general direction of the railroad company, presumably with the expectation that an eventual settlement will be had, which will enable that company to take over the portion of the

line for which the Emperor is now furnishing the funds.

Certainly every well-wisher of Ethiopia must hope that this misunderstanding, which is retarding material progress, will soon be cleared up, and that the line may be completed under conditions which will safeguard the independence of the Ethiopians themselves, with reasonable recognition of the efforts and sacrifices of the Europeans who have already devoted their time and their money to this great enterprise.\*

\* In July, 1906, the press despatches announced an accord between France, Italy, and Great Britain as imminent, adding that no convention would be signed, however, until it could be referred to the Emperor Menelik for his approval.

## CHAPTER XII

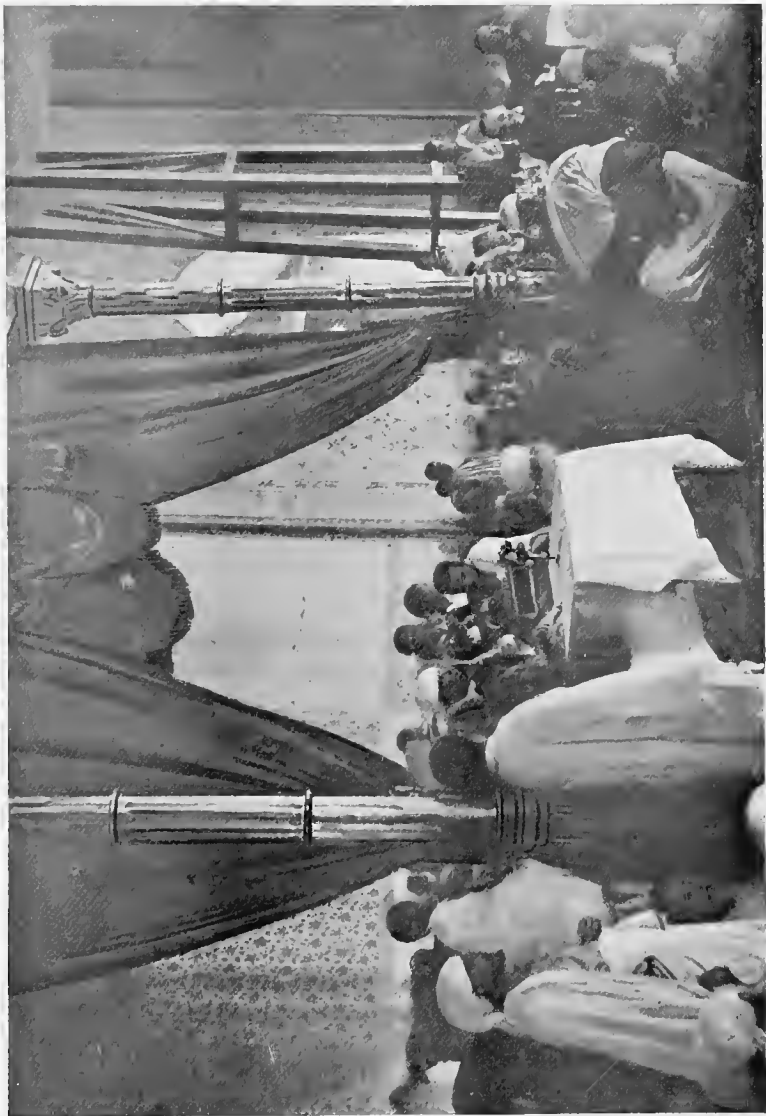
The Emperor invites 3,000 friends to banquet with us—The Ethiopian cuisine—Souvenirs for His Majesty—The Emperor returns our call—Testing Abyssinian *sang-froid*—The succession.

BEING now launched into the business for which we had come, and introduced to Ethiopian diplomatic and local society, the Emperor proposed a luncheon in our honour on Sunday morning. We had heard of these Pantagruelique banquets, and we had regretted to learn, shortly before reaching the capital, that none would probably take place during our visit, since the Emperor, as head of the Church, had entered upon the fasting period preceding Christmas. Every foreigner who visits the country hears of these feasts, and desires to be present at one, as the culminating social experience of his stay. The Negus, doubtless anticipating this wish, very considerably determined to suspend the fast, in order to give us this pleasure before our departure.

M. Chefneux told us to be ready to leave for the Guebi at nine o'clock, and the American party, including officers, marines, sailors, and servants, excluding only a sufficient number to look after our goods and chattels, filed out of the palace of the Ras Oualdo Gorghis at about that hour. We foregathered in the small audience-hall of the Guebi, where had

also assembled the gentlemen of the diplomatic corps, resplendent in their most brilliant raiment. Here again we waited. Various generals and colonels, masters of the household, the 'Mouth of the King of Kings,' and smaller fry, joined the party, and there was a spirit of good-humour and prevalence of small talk which spoke well for the Ethiopian faculty of relieving a State function of unnecessary stiffness. Finally, a procession was formed, and we traversed numerous courts into the same *aderach*, or large hall, where our first reception had taken place some days before. We entered through a side door, and felt much as though we had penetrated behind the scenes of a theatre. A large curtain separated the platform upon which we stood from the body of the chamber. The Emperor was upon his throne, with a small table before him, and a long table laid in the conventional manner, with twelve covers, had been placed to the left of the throne. The Emperor greeted us in the most unaffected way, shaking hands and smiling upon everybody. Thereupon we took the chairs assigned to us, and unfolded our snowy-white napkins embroidered with the Emperor's arms in red, the royal colour. The soldiers and sailors in the meantime had been taken to another portion of the building, and were there served with the same excellent menu which had been prepared for us. An unoccupied chair at the head of our table indicated where Majesty constructively sat.

'You see,' explained M. Chefneux, who pointed out to us the prominent persons present, and all the interesting incidents, 'when the presence of a diplomatic corps made it necessary to the Emperor to entertain his guests in the French manner, he desired to show



DINNER TO THE MISSION IN THE ADERACH.



them every courtesy possible. As His Majesty prefers the Ethiopian dishes and method of serving them, he lighted upon the expedient of providing a cover for himself at the European table. By a polite fiction which we maintain he sits with his guests and presides. In fact, he is upon his throne, as you can very well see.'

The luncheon was served, and was accompanied by wines from a very well stocked cellar. The delightful picturesqueness of the occasion was helped out by the white-robed vassals, who followed the ancient custom of pouring a drop or two from every bottle into the palms of their hands, and drinking them first, as a demonstration of good faith. His Majesty was surrounded by the highest dignitaries of the empire, most of them old men with fine bronzed features. They did not eat while the Emperor was being served. Only the greatest and most faithful may witness the Emperor in the act of eating, and none may eat in his presence. This rule is relaxed in favour of the diplomatic corps and such foreigners as are sometimes asked to luncheon, on the ground that they represent the persons of His Majesty's equals.

We were all very gay, even to the Emperor himself. Frequently he would send over for our delectation one of his Ethiopian dainties. These dishes were invariably seasoned with some sort of concentrated fire which seemed to race through the system and scarify the whole alimentary tract. The Emperor nodded cheerfully over our difficulties, and recommended copious drafts of a fine musty old tedj to relieve the situation. One or two of his special dishes seasoned for our effete palates were indeed good. There was a dried fish, for example, served with rice,

which I found excellent. The chef-d'œuvre of the Ethiopian cuisine proved to be small pieces of steak grilled on both sides and served hot. These are called teps. Then there was gommen, consisting of forced meat cooked with chopped cabbage, and ovat, a sort of ragout of meat and red pepper. As explained before, these native dishes were merely incidental to a thoroughly good European breakfast, and were sent over to us in order that we might have a full knowledge of the most notable products of the most eminent cook in Ethiopia. At each of our places we found both French rolls and native ingeras, or bread in the form of round, flat cakes, such as had been delivered to us with the durgo at numerous encampments. When Major Ciccodicola had initiated me into the proper manner of eating these ingeras, by folding them twice and breaking off morsels from the small end of the now fan-shaped cake, these morsels being then dipped into a meat sauce, I found them very palatable.

We had done valiant service through thirteen courses, when it became evident that both the Emperor and his guests were nearing the end, and when the communicative warmth of the banquet and the generous provision of champagne suggested toasts. The Minister of Italy performed the agreeable task, on behalf of his brethren, of drinking to the health of the Emperor, including in his eloquent effort some very friendly expressions in regard to the United States. The Emperor nodded approvingly, and drank back to peace and progress as represented at his board. The good wishes of the Western for the Eastern world were then voiced by the American representative, after which the speech-making was



over. Oratory ordinarily has very little vogue in Abyssinia. Now a silver ewer and basin were brought before the throne, the imperial hands touched the water and were dried, and it was time for the general banquet to begin.

The curtain was drawn back, and while the distinguished guests drank coffee and smoked, the audience-hall slowly filled with the more lowly invitees, who took their places around small tables, or tabourets, seating themselves upon the floor. A band of shawm-players entered, and continued their melancholy music throughout the feast. There must have been 1,200 guests around these little tables, and there were as many more to come when the first lot had eaten their fill. A most impressive feature of this banquet was the extraordinary order which prevailed. The guests consisted of functionaries, military officers, and prominent subjects—all men who knew their places, and who very quietly took them. Nobody was in a hurry.

Presence at this and similar functions is the Ethiopian equivalent to being presented at Court; it is the hall-mark of respectable station. M. Chefneux mentioned the number of sheep and goats required to set forth a feast of this description. The figures were enormous, but have slipped from memory. Serving-men with large baskets kept the good things going, and others passed tall blue enamelled drinking-cups filled with tedj. In the good old days the drinking-cups were of horn, but modernism 'made in Germany' has obliterated at last this vestige of the Biblical civilization of Ethiopia. So great was the demand for tedj that a pump concealed without the aderach forced it through a pipe, under the end of which one

cup replaced another, as soon as the one preceding was full.

We watched this interesting scene until almost three o'clock, when, with the Emperor's permission, all the European and American guests withdrew. The Emperor himself remained, so we were told, until five o'clock, in the meantime patiently and watchfully communicating with his subjects. It was not hard to see that, under circumstances like these, he must certainly keep in close touch with his people in more respects than one. Every Sunday morning at Addis-Ababa, except during fast seasons, the Emperor gives one of these banquets for his subjects, and when foreigners whom he wishes to honour are in the city they are invited to assist.

Much stress has been laid by all returning travellers upon the presumed fact that nothing can be accomplished in Ethiopia of an official character without a judicious distribution of presents. It would be untrue to say that small gifts of money are not extremely necessary at times in Addis-Ababa, as they are in other parts of the world. To add to the natural and inherited covetousness of mankind, Europeans have been overbidding each other in Africa for so many years that unhealthy expectations respecting the generosity of new arrivals have been formed, which is not surprising. It would be equally unjust to charge this situation, which has been immensely exaggerated in most available accounts, to the special venality of the Ethiopian people. They are not time and lip servers merely ; on the contrary, their cheerful willingness to perform small services out of innate courtesy was a matter of daily occurrence in our own experience, from the time we left the coast until we

returned. A capital is a capital, however, the world over, and Europeans have to blame themselves if they have gradually increased the difficulties of their own situation as regards gratuities and gifts.

To assume that the Emperor's favour can be virtually bought by presents, or that he esteems the giving of presents as in the nature of tribute, is likewise grossly unfair to him. The Abyssinian tradition requires that the stranger shall bring gifts, as the wise men brought gifts to the Christ Child 2,000 years ago; but the value of the gift resides in the intention of the giver, a distinction which should be constantly borne in mind.

It is scarcely necessary to observe that the American Republic is not addicted to gift giving or receiving. We therefore brought no elephant—the King of England had sent a trained elephant to the Emperor just before our arrival—but we had brought with us a number of souvenirs for His Majesty, which were presented informally a few days after our arrival, and which appeared to give him much pleasure. The signed portrait of President Roosevelt excited his liveliest interest. He studied the face for a number of minutes, and then passed it to a group of generals, who took equal interest in scrutinizing it. The President's book on 'North American Big Game' was likewise received with great respect. I fear that His Majesty will never be able to read it. He thought it remarkable that so young a man had accomplished so much.

When these objects had been laid aside, a beautiful American writing-machine, which the manufacturers had asked to have offered, was brought into the imperial presence, and regarded with polite interest.

The practical mind of the Emperor developed the question immediately :

‘ Why can’t we have an Amharic typewriter ?’

M. Chefneux replied that, whereas we had only 26 letters in our alphabet, it would require 251 characters to represent the Amharic language, and the construction of a machine containing so many figures presented practical difficulties.

The typewriter was carried away, and a magazine rifle of the latest model, a most beautiful arm, with burnished barrel and gold-plated mountings, bearing a special inscription, was presented. Now the imperial eyes brightened with evident pleasure. Mr. Wales, who had a similar rifle, illustrated the method of loading and firing, whereupon the Emperor followed his movements, and with the instant appreciation of the connoisseur, nodded approvingly. Interest in the new American gun was so intense that Mr. Wales was required to fire through an open doorway at a blank wall. The ten shots rang out with startling rapidity. Generals, judges, colonels, and understrappers crowded about the doorway. The consequences were so satisfactory that His Majesty determined to try his own rifle himself, and, very slightly concerned for his generals and judges, raised the weapon to the proper angle, without changing his posture upon the throne, and aimed through the same open doorway. There was immediately a wild stampede for cover on the part of the satellites while the imperial hand pulled the trigger. The Emperor’s eyes showed that he appreciated the humour of the situation.

A few days later, while visiting our encampment, a much more amusing incident of the same sort occurred. A private had been showing off the regulation army

gun, and the Emperor expressed a desire to handle one himself. Again he fired through an open doorway, and as the cartridges were blank, no possible harm could have resulted, though the panic was no less great than before. Blank cartridges are practically unknown in Ethiopia, and when Menelik had ascertained that we used them for saluting purposes, he intimated a wish to receive a few.

‘I am going to my country place at Addis Alem next week,’ he said, ‘and I shall be accompanied by many officers. I expect to amuse myself with these cartridges. I shall be able to teach some of my officers to show courage under fire.’ All the Emperor’s friends bear testimony to his general good-humour and love of joking.

The audience at which our few gifts were offered terminated with the presentation of a well-selected lot of American garden seeds, which was the most modest and yet the most highly-valued gift of all. These seeds had been sent to me by some of the officers of the Department of Agriculture. I was told afterwards that they had been distributed by the Emperor himself, with great care, among his own farmers, and that he was intensely interested in the results. He regards agriculture as the basis of all true wealth, and his great ambition is to develop a love of farming among his people.

We did not meet the Empress. Nothing in the way of public ceremonial occurred during our stay in which her presence was involved, and we departed too soon to have the pleasure of seeing her in private. She is said to be a woman of great force of character, and, in her youth, one of striking beauty. She is now forty-

seven years of age. The Empress Taitu is the daughter of a former Ras of Gondar, and one of the hereditary Princesses of the now absorbed kingdom of Siemen, the inhabitants of which are reputed for their white skins. She has been several times married, and became the wife of the present Emperor in 1883. They have no children. This fact raises the question of the succession in the mind of everyone visiting the empire. It is fully believed by those who have interests in the country that when, in the course of Nature, the shrewd and great Emperor Menelik shall have been gathered to his fathers, it will be found that he had made provision for an orderly transfer of power to other hands.

Fortunately for Ethiopia and the peace of the world, the Emperor bids fair to resist for many a year the ravages of time. His vigorous manhood is attributed to a knowledge of 'the science of proper living, the benefits of temperance in all things, and the healthful influence of a balanced mind, from which all worries are expelled and few gain entrance.'

The Emperor returned our visit to the palace in state one fine morning, accompanied by the huge escort which follows and precedes him everywhere. We put on purple and fine linen in honour of this event. The officers of the escort effected wonders as decorative artists with our small stock of flags, which we draped about the portrait of the President in the reception tent. The entire escort awaited the arrival of royalty outside the compound, giving the Emperor a salute of twenty-one guns as he entered. His Majesty was all amiability and smiles, and the American Idea was illustrated for his benefit to the extent of our



HIS MAJESTY AT THE PALACE OF RAS QWALDO GORGHIS.





resources. He walked slowly around the enclosure, criticising with a soldier's quick eye the sailors' canvas hammocks, the haversacks and their contents, and particularly the hospital tent, with its compact case of medicines and simple instruments. He said that he thought it all very nice and comfortable, but not quite so easy of transportation as the Ethiopian equipment. In this he was perfectly right, since the Ethiopian equipment consists of a small and very light wall tent with bamboo poles, and a gun.

The promenade over, the escort, under Captain Thorpe, performed a great variety of gymnastic exercises, which the Emperor had never before witnessed, and which he applauded vigorously. These exercises concluded, His Majesty, with twenty or more chieftains who accompanied him, consented to enter the palace of the Ras Oualdo Gorghis, where refreshments were served. It became necessary for the Emperor to again suspend the fasting period prescribed by the Church, in order to permit of a general exchange of toasts. It was during these gaieties that Menelik was instructed in the mechanism of our regulation rifle, as previously described.

We were told afterwards that the Emperor had made an exceptionally long visit, and I trust that it was so. He was a most agreeable and appreciative guest. He came just after the treaty had been virtually agreed upon, and he seemed to feel quite as contented as we ourselves with the commercial alliance just contracted. When farewells had been exchanged, he crossed our first courtyard on foot, mounted his brilliantly-caparisoned mule, and rode away, followed by the friendly regards of all whom he left behind.

## CHAPTER XIII

The market—Jewellery—Abyssinian art and architecture—The national costume—A Haitian at the Court of Menelik—Ethnology.

ALTHOUGH the remaining days of our stay in Addis-Ababa were exceedingly busy ones, they were by no means uneventful. The great distraction of the occasional idle hour was to visit the market. It was richer in local colour than in merchandise dear to the collector's heart. As usual in other parts of the world, prices rose rapidly with the approach of any American. The market itself was merely an open place, the vendors displaying their wares either upon the ground or in the rows of tumble-down booths. The horse market was by far the most interesting feature of this daily fair. Asses, mules, and horses by the hundred occupied the space assigned to them, and were brought forth and put through their paces upon a large level area close by. We never visited the market without seeing a number of horses being madly galloped about this exhibition track, mounted by white-robed riders, who furnished a spectacle far more real and picturesque than the Roman races at the circus.

Dr. Pease was the most assiduous student of the market, and used to astonish us by the variety of his acquisitions. When he left the capital he had a bundle of probably twenty spears, brass hand-cut



*Photograph by M. Bertolini.*

THE EMPRESS OF ETHIOPIA (IN THE CENTRE) AND THE EMPEROR'S  
GRANDCHILD.



Greek crosses much used in Church ceremonials, brass and ivory bracelets, silver rings, leopard, lion, and zebra skins, and any quantity of minor objects. We all became inoculated with the collector's microbe, and as the days sped by, small merchants learned to besiege our camp with every manner of trinket, from boa - constrictor skins to ostrich feathers and live monkeys. Under the head of live-stock, our soldiers acquired a small wild cat, a young baboon, and a number of monkeys, all of which either died, escaped, or were released before we reached the coast. The best things available for purchase were leopard skins. These were obtainable at from two dollars gold up—generally up. As these skins are used by the Abyssinians for mantles, they are usually cut along the side instead of down the middle of the stomach. In this form they are more readily arranged as mantles, but are decidedly less valuable for subsequent preparation with stuffed heads as rugs.

We all purchased rather curious rings of pure native gold. The gold itself is secured from placer mines in the Wallago country, and in the form of dust is placed by the miners in quills. Itinerant merchants secure these quills, work the metal into malleable rings, and forward the rings to the larger buying markets. It may be remarked in passing that the price of gold is not appreciably less in Abyssinia than elsewhere. There are no embroideries, carpets, or other articles of artistic production in the Ethiopian markets, unless exception be made of the fine hand - woven cotton cloths with wide red borders worn as chammas. Two of these cost me six dollars gold. Native baskets may be purchased in infinite variety, and are usually well made and attractive. They are used by the natives

to carry butter and milk, and are consequently very ingeniously woven.

Every Abyssinian woman loves jewellery, and wears it. Singular wooden or bone hairpins, bead necklaces, bracelets and anklets of silver, brass, copper, and ivory are worn, but are difficult to find in the open market. The best type of jewellery consists of crosses, armguards, and ornaments of silver filigree work. It is all made of thin plates of metal over which the wire is soldered. The filigree is subdivided by narrow borders of silver pattern, and the intervening spaces are made up of many patterns, the most of which contain grains set at regular intervals. This is one of the most antique forms of jewellery in the world. It is probable that these same filigree patterns have been worked from the most remote times without any change in design. The decorations of the Order of Ethiopia, which the Emperor sometimes confers, are of this characteristic form, the silver being gilded.

The orthodox Ethiopian wears a string around his neck, to which is attached a scroll containing an extract from the Evangelists, a silver ring and ear-pick, and a small cross. Some of the latter are very artistic in form. It is occasionally possible to pick up horn drinking-cups of interesting workmanship, but the Belgian or German cup of enamelled iron is driving out the old-fashioned cup of domestic make.

All that I have said, or shall say, of art in Abyssinia holds good as regards architecture. The contrast between the punctiliousness of the Abyssinian manner and the primitive simplicity of the Abyssinian home has not hitherto been construed in favour of the race. They are generally thought to be deficient in con-



THE MARKET AT ADDIS-ABABA.





structive power. While this is true, in order to find the reason we must go back farther than to the presumed indifference or incapacity to evolve an architectural ideal. There can be no fundamental cause for such backwardness on the part of a nation with a history and literature, except as it may be found in fundamental law. Such a law exists in Abyssinia, and by its operation during centuries it has necessarily retarded development of the art of building, since it prescribes in terms: 'As to the habitation, it shall be limited to that which is purely necessary. . . . Our Saviour Jesus Christ ordered our fashion of living to be based upon His example . . . it is told that He had no habitation, and no place whereupon to lay His head.'

While these prescriptions have been accepted literally as regards private dwellings—the Abyssinian home contains neither chairs nor beds, and is itself a mere temporary construction of slats and mud—earthly tabernacles have nevertheless been erected to the glory of God at Axum, Gondar, and Lalibella, which are fairly comparable to the temples in Egypt, Greece, and Rome. It is presumed that the artisans who created these monuments were brought over from the eastern coast of the Red Sea.

The monuments of Axum are of remote antiquity. They consist of obelisks, of which but one is standing, of vast subterranean excavations and of enormous blocks of stone cut in the form of seats, and which, placed in a circle, probably were intended for an Areopagus. There are, moreover, two inscriptions, one Greek and the other Himarite, and the ruins of an ancient temple, where the Kings of Ethiopia were crowned. The present church of Axum stands upon

the site of the ruined structure, which occupied a square 63 metres long.

At Gondar there exist still vestiges of the immense Gothic palace constructed by the Portuguese, and of a stone bridge over the Blue Nile. My interpreter, who had been there, never wearied of talking of Gondar, as an Italian might speak of Rome.

At Lalibella, the holy city of the Abyssinian clergy, there are ten monolithic churches carved out of the solid rock, of which Gabriel Simon brought back an interesting description in 1885. These churches, presumed to be of the fifth century, unite features of Byzantine, Greek, and Arab architecture.

The details of the Abyssinian costume are of little interest. The chamma is its essential feature. Properly suspended, it gives shade in the desert, it becomes a bed-covering at night, and it lends itself equally well to the requirements of the shepherd, the warrior, or the city coquette. It relieves ugliness of its crudity, it heightens majesty and beauty, and it is a graceful and becoming garment whenever and by whomsoever worn.

Until recently only the clergy wore any head-dress, consisting in their case of an enormous turban of white cloth. Nowadays both men and women are becoming fond of European-made, broad-brimmed felt hats.

Children go about naked as when they entered the world during the first few years of their lives, after which their costume is scarcely less summary. When the boys enter manhood the national costume is put on, consisting of cotton trousers, very generous about the seat and tight around the ankles. These trousers extend just below the calves, and they are secured

with a long cotton belt, twisted, and serving many purposes. Originally the girdle was intended to protect the waist during combat. A shirt usually accompanies the trousers. Over these garments is thrown in classic folds the red-bordered chamma. Among the poorer classes this toga is made of cheap American cloth. With relative opulence comes the hand-woven chamma with a narrow red border, the width of this border indicating to some extent the status of the wearer. In exceptional cases the red border is replaced by silk embroidery. This costume is common to both man and woman, the latter draping their chammass in a manner so unmistakably feminine as to prevent any possible errors of identity. The women also wear a long robe rather than a shirt. The soldier wears a chamma negligently thrown over the left shoulder, the right shoulder and arm being free for conflict. Sandals are sometimes worn, shoes never, except in the case of a few of the very highest dignitaries, like the Emperor himself and the Ras Makonnen. Some distinguished generals wear stockings.

The chiefs distinguished by the Emperor modify their national costume by wearing a silk or satin shirt decorated with silver or gold. Finally, the supremely desired article of clothing is the lebdé, or pelerine, offered only by the Emperor as a reward for striking conduct. This pelerine is made of lion or black leopard skin, ornamented with silver thread. The skin is so cut that the forelegs and tail dance in the wind, contributing in large degree to the savage picturesqueness of the costume, which accords well with the rugged splendour of the mountains.

Both sexes have the unpleasant habit of greasing

their heads with butter. This is said to enable the brain to withstand the darts of the sun more readily, causing the scalp eventually to become exceedingly hard and resistant.

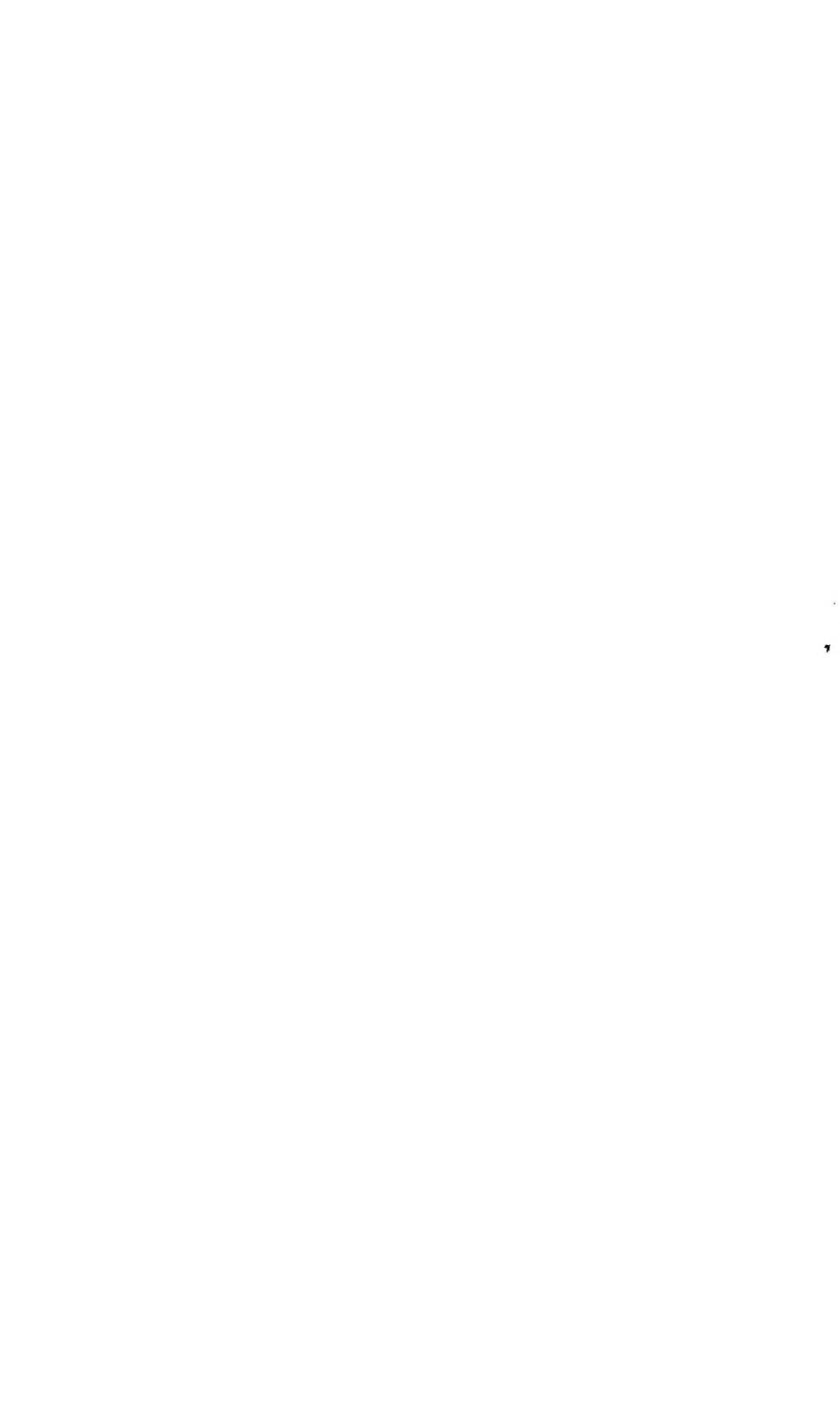
Native pictorial art appears not to have progressed beyond a very primitive stage. Most of the churches contain pictures of religious subjects, but they are only curious. They always represent the wicked in profile and the righteous in full face. Another singularity of Ethiopian pictorial art is that the good are always depicted as white men and the bad as black men. While the tint of the pure Ethiopian varies between light olive-green and intense black, he does not regard himself as a negro, and, for that matter, possesses none of the striking negroid characteristics save that of colour. In thickness of skull, facial formation, shape of the foot, and notably of the heel, the Ethiopian is quite unlike the negro. Seven distinct shades are recognised by students of the Abyssinian complexion, and personal vanity is most highly flattered by possession of the lighter tints of the skin.

I must relate in this connection an incident several times recalled to us in the country in regard to Mr. Benito Sylvain. Mr. Sylvain is a highly-educated young Haitian of wealthy parentage—a full-blooded negro, as a matter of course. Mr. Sylvain conceived the happy idea some years ago of seeking the Emperor Menelik, in order to secure His Majesty's adhesion to a programme for the general amelioration of the negro race. To Mr. Benito Sylvain it seemed especially appropriate that the greatest black man in the world should become the honorary president of his projected society. The Emperor is said to have



*Photograph by M. Bertolini.*

AN ETHIOPIAN GENTLEMAN.



listened with great patience to the exposition of this idea, and then, with that fine, dry humour characteristic of him, he replied :

‘Yours is a most excellent idea, my young friend. The negro should be uplifted. I applaud your theory, and I wish you the greatest possible success. But in coming to me to take the leadership, you are knocking at the wrong door, so to speak. You know, I am not a negro at all : I am a Caucasian.’

This reply might have disconcerted some men, but not Mr. Benito Sylvain, for we encountered him in person at Laga-Arba, on his way to the capital, while we were going in the opposite direction. We had settled ourselves comfortably that fine afternoon, clothed in whatever had come handiest, and not supposing any neighbours to be within less than a week’s journey of us, when off in the distance a white tent was seen to take sudden and definite form. A moment later a foreign flag appeared above this tent. Five minutes thereafter a card was presented to me, bearing the name of ‘Commandant Benito Sylvain, Envoy of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Haiti to His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia.’ This was interesting. Within a few moments Commandant Benito Sylvain arrived in person, in full uniform, varnished Wellington boots, spurs, white breeches, sword, and the Order of the Cross of Solomon upon his breast. Mr. Sylvain said that he was going to Addis-Ababa to present a letter from his Government to the Emperor. He intimated that he might remain there, to establish a permanent Legation. He was a most polite young man, speaking French that was a pleasure to hear, and I have no doubt whatever that he is *persona grata* at the

capital quite as much as he was in the American camp.

The real Ethiopians, as the Emperor himself fully understands, are a mixed race, in the formation of which several distinct nations have contributed. The primitive stock is of Ethiopic origin, but, as the language clearly shows, it was at an early period mixed with the tribe of Himyarites from the opposite coast of Arabia, who in their turn were ethnologically more or less closely connected with the Hebrews rather than with the Joctanides, or the Arabians, properly speaking. The Ethiopians are a fine, strong race, more usually of a copper hue than not, and are altogether different from the negroes, with whom, however, they have frequently been confounded, but only because they were called a black people. The nose of the pure type is nearly straight, the eye beautifully clear, yet languishing, and the hair is black and crisp, without being woolly. Left to itself, the hair of the Abyssinian would become long, coarse, and undulating. Children of both sexes have their heads shaved, retaining only a lock, somewhat as the Chinaman retains his queue. It is now the mode for men to wear their hair shortly clipped through life. The women frequently do the same, although more usually they divide their hair into tresses, which follow in line from the front of the head to the back, where they are gathered into a knot. A young girl's hair is often completely cropped except for a fringe around the brow. With each added year another row of hair is permitted to grow, until finally there is no clipped surface, but a succession of carefully trimmed bands of hair of graduated length.



## CHAPTER XIV

### Manners and customs of the desert races.

THE ethnological observations of the preceding chapter apply to the inhabitants of Choa, Tigré, Godjam, and the territory of the one-time kingdom of Amhara. In these unified kingdoms the ruling Ethiopic race is found in its best estate. By conquest, annexation, and imperceptibly growing influence, it has now extended its sway over the Adals, Danakils, Somali-Issas, and Gallas. These tribes are ruled by the Ethiopians with wise forbearance, but with recognised authority. Collectively, these nomadic tribes constitute a savage aristocracy. The unclad African of the desert requires no book or heraldic device to enable him to remember his family history for 500 years. Not only does he think himself the salt of the desert, but he knows it.

M. Pierre Carette, who has spent ten years among these people, is without doubt the best equipped man in the world to discuss their past, and he has carefully pieced it out, by patiently listening to the accounts given to him by his uncivilized friends. The influence acquired by M. Carette over these people is a striking fact in recent African history. A man of the world, a Parisian by birth, endowed with unusual intelligence and business capacity, he likewise exists as a sort of

uncrowned king of the desert. Around the headquarters of the railroad at Diré-Daouah may be seen, any day in the week, several hundred Issas, Danakils, and Gourgouras, who may have travelled for days across the burning sand, in order to consult with M. Carette upon the value of a camel or the wisdom of a deal in goats. M. Carette listens with great patience, gives out sound advice, and finds his reward in the interesting social study which he is enabled to carry on. For all of my information in regard to these people I am indebted to M. Carette.

The savage of the desert says of his country : 'It is clean.' To him our cities are prisons, and our good cheer an invention of the devil to stiffen his limbs and fatten his body. He prefers as a roof either the blue sky, or his hut made of four sticks and some brush ; or, if he be a camel-driver, the shelter made by throwing the vegetable fibre mats upon which the 'charge' is laid over the boxes constituting the load itself. His supreme joy is to kill his fellow-man, and having done so, he parades the fact to the world by wearing an ostrich feather in his hair. Pushed by necessity, he sometimes visits the miserable native villages ; but if once installed therein, he returns with difficulty to his desert. Ordinarily he is unsociable. His life is all on the desert, where he feels at home with his cattle, which supply him with food and clothing. His aliment consists of milk, a little meat, and such grain as he buys at the villages. His occupation consists in herding his cattle. He migrates as drought or exhaustion of forage or water may require. He is always intensely proud. M. Vigneras, Secretary of the French mission under Minister Lagarde which went up to Addis-Ababa a number of years ago,



A LORD OF THE DESERT.



recounts an incident of caravan life, showing the character of the native. One of his domestics, seeing a girl a dozen years of age pass by, said to her :

‘Nabat, nabat!’ (Good-day, good-day!)

The girl made no reply. The domestic, of light-hearted disposition, continued :

‘Very well ; since thou art thus disdainful, the chief of Djibouti, who is here, will put thee in prison.’

‘Thou mayest say to thy chief,’ then said the girl, ‘that we are here in the brush, and that I laugh at his prison,’ and she continued on her way.

The belt of desert coast land extends up to the base of the mountains, and is divided among three grand races—the Danakils, the Somali-Issas, and the Gallas. The Danakils belong to the great family of the Afas or Adals, and occupy in general the territory between the kingdoms of Choa and the province of Harrar. Their lands border upon those of the Somali-Issas, a fraction of the great Somali race, with whom they are constantly at war. The Gallas are generally found to the south of the Somalis. These three tribes are all Musulmans, although frequently lukewarm in their devotion to their principles.

The Danakils are exceedingly black. They have slightly receding foreheads, a lively but treacherous eye, long profiles, regular features, and extremely thin faces. Their heads are covered with curly but not woolly hair ; they are, furthermore, covered with grease. They take great care of their hair, and usually wear a comb with which they keep it in order, shaving also the back of the head to the level of the ears. Their clothing consists of a piece of cloth around the middle and a short toga, which is worn over the left shoulder, the right being bared. In the interior of the country

the cloths are replaced by sheep-skins. The women are beasts of burden. They wear much the same garments as the men, with ornaments of glass beads, and copper rings about the arms and ankles. The desert tribes in general are armed with lances and long double-edged knives, worn in front of the stomach, and a buckler of hippopotamus skin. Permission to carry firearms is refused by the Emperor, although many are said to possess rifles hidden away in their villages.

The Somalis are finer in form and feature than the Danakils. Their skin is midway between black and a rich creamy colour. Their hair is finer—a consequence of their habit of covering it with lime, in order to tint it red. The Somali woman is more coquettish than the Danakil, and wears more complicated clothing. According to legend, the territory now occupied by the Somalis was formerly occupied by the Gallas. The Somalis believe themselves that they migrated from somewhere back of Aden. They have no written language, but they have family traditions which are handed down from father to son. They have a sentiment of honour—respect the aged and the insane, and scorn the foreigner. Their graves are indicated by a border of stone, in the centre of which the passer-by is expected to cast another stone, at the same time reciting a prayer. Though incorrigible bandits, the Somalis take toll only from foreigners and neighbouring tribes. Thus their sins are meritorious in their own eyes. Should they attack one of the members of their own tribe, or take his property, they would be severely punished. Theft entrains amputation of the hands.

When a Somali boy is born, if the family is united,

as many sheep are killed as the family fortunes permit, and dancing becomes the order of the day. The dance is always of the same sort—a monotonous stamping without metre, for the Somalis have no musical instruments. There is much clapping of the hands and pounding of the earth with lances. We were favoured with several of these dances while on the desert, each of which was followed by attempts upon the privy purse. Upon one occasion, when the dance had been undertaken for my benefit, accompanied by an interminable hymn in my praise, I separated the chief from the band, and gave him a number of exceedingly stiff-printed muslin flags of red and yellow, the colours of the St. Louis Exposition. The chief insinuated that money would be more appreciated than flags, whereupon a thaler was discreetly stuffed into his hand for his own use and benefit, with the comment that the flags were representative of a very great enterprise, and therefore to be more prized than silver or gold. With the thaler in his own hand the chief appreciated the point, and made an eloquent explanation to his followers, who sat upon their haunches and listened with evident dissatisfaction, but finally took a flag each. Nothing could have been more ridiculous than those dignified, amiable savages each carrying a gaudy flag. Some held them out at arm's length, others tied them to their person, and all of them looked so distressed and embarrassed by these strange offerings that, as the donor, I began to feel that my action had been very reprehensible.

When a Somali man attains forty years, the family kill a sheep and a goat, or an ox, to celebrate the fact that thenceforth he is a man completely formed. The Somalis intermarry a great deal, but find their wives

in another branch of the family than their own. When the choice is made, the parents of the young man seek the girl's father, and give him a breech cloth, a sheep, and a package of tobacco. The two are now betrothed, and no third person can seek the hand of the girl. The next step is to arrange the marriage contract. In the western provinces the bride's parents receive from the groom twelve female camels, in the east twenty female camels. Two cows, twelve ewes, or twenty-four goats, are equal to one female camel. The price having been paid, the parents of the young man say to the father of the girl: 'Behold, the moment of the marriage is come.'

The affair being agreed upon, the husband is told that his bride will come to his house on a given evening. On the date fixed the groom and several of his friends approach the bride's house. The groom cuts a branch and plants it upon a selected spot, and then and there his house is built around it. The best of these dwellings is but a poor excuse of a hut. At sunset the bride is led by a cortège of women to her husband's new house. The groom then arrives, accompanied by his friends. At the door of the house stands a live sheep. The newly-married couple enter alone, the husband giving to his wife a blow with his whip of hippopotamus hide. He then leaves her side and comes without, only to re-enter the house and administer a second blow. Three times he does this, and her submissive state being presumed to have been firmly established, they both emerge together. The groom now holds the sheep's head while his wife cuts its throat. Together they carry the carcass within, and while they prepare it for the pot, someone presents the newly-married couple with a basket of milk. The



basket of milk is opened and offered to a man whose father and mother are still living. After this man has tasted it, the remainder is passed among his friends.

During seven days the family and friends gorge themselves with food at the expense of the parents of the bride. After that the door of the new house is filled in, and a new door is made upon the opposite side. Husband and wife now change sandals. The wedding festivities have now concluded, and the battle of life has begun. If the husband wishes, the wife may remain three or four years with her parents. In this case the latter pay her expenses, unless they have returned to the husband a part of the property previously converted to their use in payment of the bride. If the wife dies, the husband goes to her father, saying: 'Give me another wife, or give me the camels which remain.' If the father-in-law has no other daughters, the widower may reclaim one from his uncle-in-law.

Perhaps the husband is not satisfied with his wife; thereupon the father of the girl says: 'Bring her to me in order that I may see.' The discredited wife remains with her parents two weeks, and if the doleances of the husband seem to rest upon good foundation, the objectionable wife is replaced by a sister.

Divorce among the Somalis consists in simple separation. The husband needs but to formulate his griefs before witnesses, and to declare his intention of freeing himself. It does not appear that the wife has a similar remedy. Even in Ethiopia proper the wife has a very subordinate status, and must possess exceptional qualifications to control in any degree the movements of her husband.

When a man dies, the members of his family lead several of his animals to the grave, and there sacrifice them. Nothing of the sort occurs in the event of the death of a woman.

The Gallas are much more advanced towards civilization than either the Danakils or the Somalis. Their communities are directed by a council of chiefs. They have never possessed, properly speaking, a State organization—a fact which has greatly facilitated the absorption of their territory by the Ethiopians.

## CHAPTER XV

The United States of Abyssinia—The King of Kaffa—The evolution of Ethiopia under Menelik—Property rights.

MENELIK has created the United States of Abyssinia—a work for which he was endowed by Nature with the constructive intelligence of a Bismarck, and the faculty for handling men by sheer amiability of a McKinley. In his younger and salad days, when the crown of Choa sat uneasily upon the head which dreamed then of a united Abyssinia, he knew how to be a Bismarck. To-day he is all McKinley. Unity is an accomplished fact, and he says, as said McKinley: 'The day of exclusiveness is over.' I have talked of Menelik with many men, and upon whatever points in regard to his character they may have disagreed, they have all asserted in varying terms that his natural impulses are every one in favour of methods of conciliation and kindness.

The story is old enough of his reception of his rebellious vassal, the King of Kaffa. This Prince, so proud that he wore ordinarily a mantle without sleeves, and had himself fed by a slave in order that he might reserve his hands for fighting his enemies, was made prisoner and brought to Addis-Ababa. Upon entering each of the three courts of the Guebi, the King of Kaffa prostrated himself in sign of abject submission.

Finally he reached the imperial presence, where he fell flat and placed a stone upon the back of his neck, and thus waited for Menelik to speak. The Emperor's wrath rose with the recollection of the wrongs which the Prince of Kaffa had done him, and his soldiers cried out injury after injury upon the unhappy King. After the tumult had continued for some moments the Negus rose, and, commanding silence, said :

'Go ! Throw off that stone, and rise. You are less to be blamed than these men, who wish sentence to be passed upon you by a man in anger.'

The King of Kaffa rose, and sentence was deferred until the Emperor in his calmer moments was able to devise a judgment that was wise as well as just.

The unmistakable tendency of Ethiopia to come out of the darkness of the ages has been made manifest under the last three Emperors—Theodore, John, and Menelik. The careers of the first two are sufficiently well known. Theodore attracted attention by detaining as prisoners a number of British Government Envoys, because, forsooth, Palmerston had neglected to acknowledge his letter to the Queen. Thus Theodore brought upon his country the punitive expedition of Lord Napier in 1868, and found a suicide's grave himself.

Menelik, born in 1842, was the hereditary ruler of the kingdom of Choa. The Kings of Choa are presumed to be the descendants of the Queen of Sheba, whose own son Menelik claimed Solomon as his father. By traditional right, this line of Kings of Choa claimed suzerainty over the empire, as Kings of Kings, until the middle of the fourteenth century. Then came the Moslem invasion under Mahomed Gragne, who promptly possessed himself of the richest kingdom of the group, namely Choa. The dethroned King of Choa sought

asylum of his vassal lord the King of Tigré. The King of Tigré found it convenient to take charge of the imperial crown as well as the imperial person. The tradition in regard to the overlordship of the King of Choa was broken, and various successors of the King of Tigré, of whom history takes little account until Theodore appeared, followed each other upon the imperial throne.

Now, the power of tradition is very strong in Ethiopia, so Theodore guarded against any internal difficulties upon his accession by demanding of the King of Choa the person of his son Menelik, the present Emperor. Thus the latter passed his youth as a hostage at the Court of Theodore.

Theodore began the work of centralization by quietly dropping the kingdoms of Siemen and Amhara as such. There then remained but three separate political and feudal entities—Tigré, Choa, and Godjam. After the death of Theodore, the Ras John, who had previously been in rebellion against him, secured the mastery of the empire. In the meantime Menelik had obtained his liberty, and ruled in Choa as vassal King until the death of John, with whom he had lived on good terms. Upon John's death he took possession of the imperial power, having behind him not only the rich and well-organized kingdom of Choa, but the force of tradition.

When the Emperor John lay dying in 1887, and having no direct successor, it is said that he commended to his chiefs his natural son, young Ras Mangasha. Ras Mangasha lives to-day, but as a tranquil and submissive subject of Menelik. Menelik, even at that early date, had justified his right to command. He was the overshadowing figure of the time, and so

was proclaimed Emperor on March 26, 1889, with the consent of the great leaders of the period.

Then followed the troubles with Italy. The details of the diplomatic negotiations between the two nations make tedious reading to-day. By Article XVII. of the Treaty of Ucciali, it was agreed that 'His Majesty the King of Kings of Ethiopia *consents* to employ the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy in treating all matters that may arise with other Powers and Governments.' The Italian Government, on the strength of this treaty, formally announced, on October 11, 1889, to the Powers of Europe the establishment of a protectorate over Abyssinia.

It should be borne in mind that prior to this period the Ras Mangasha of Tigré had been in the field, an aspirant for the imperial throne, and that Italy, through Count Antonelli, had espoused the cause of Menelik. Menelik came to terms with Mangasha, who acknowledged the former's suzerainty. After the settlement of this domestic difficulty, the protectorate question with Italy became acute. Menelik announced his accession to the imperial throne to certain European Powers directly, and was informed in return that he should have made this communication through the Italian Government.

He wrote at once to King Humbert, September 27, 1890, denouncing Article XVII. of the Treaty of Ucciali. His contention was that in his version of the treaty, written in the Amharic language, the word 'consents' had not been used, and that in place thereof were the words the 'Negus has the power' to employ the Government of Italy in treating with other Governments. The Abyssinian Emperor drew a very sharp distinction between his presumed permissive right to

make communications to the world through the Italian Government, and his obligation so to do, presumed by the Italian Government.

Diplomatic relations were broken off, and Menelik issued a circular to the Powers describing the boundaries of his empire as he understood them. These boundaries failed to accord with those claimed for the Italian coast colony of Erythrea. In this letter Menelik said :

‘ I have no intention of being an indifferent spectator if far-distant Powers make their appearance with the idea of dividing Africa, Ethiopia having been for fourteen centuries an island of Christians among a sea of Pagans. As the Almighty has protected Ethiopia to this day, I am confident He will increase and protect it in the future.’

The situation continued to be complicated for a number of years. War broke out, and the fateful battle of Adowa was fought in 1896, with disaster to Italian arms. Prior to engaging in this campaign, Menelik issued the following proclamation :

‘ Hitherto God has graciously preserved our native land. He has permitted us to conquer our enemies, and to reconstitute our Ethiopia. It is by the grace of God that I have reigned hitherto, and if my death is near, I have no anxiety on that account, for death is the fate of all men. But to this day God has never humiliated me. In the same manner He will sustain me in the future.

‘ An enemy is come across the sea. He has broken through our frontiers, in order to destroy our fatherland and our faith. I allowed him to seize my possessions, and I entered upon lengthy negotiations with

him, in the hope of obtaining justice without bloodshed, but the enemy refuses to listen. He continues to advance, he undermines our territories and our people like a mole. Enough! With the help of God I will defend the inheritance of my forefathers, and drive back the invader by force of arms. Let every man who has sufficient strength accompany me. And he who has not, let him pray for us.'

After Adowa the political independence of Menelik was a recognised fact. The relations with Italy were put upon a healthy basis by Major Ciccodicola, and other nations sent missions to the capital.

An era of good feeling now prevailed, leaving the Emperor free to carry on his work of reconstitution. By the submission of Mangasha the autonomy of Tigré had disappeared. Menelik himself was the hereditary King of Choa, and the King of Godjam was the one remaining tie which bound the feudal system to the new. Tecla Haimonot was not disturbed as King of Godjam, however, and he died in the fulness of his years as such, early in 1901. By his death the purpose of the African Bismarck had been accomplished. Abyssinia had been unified. Menelik sat upon the throne of the King of Kings, but the vassal Kings existed only in memory. Some of the provincial Princes ruling over great tribes are, to this day, referred to as Kings, but the word no longer has its old meaning as applied to them, for they are merely governors, who derive their authority from Menelik, not merely acknowledging his overlordship, but administering his laws and gathering his taxes. The old Abyssinian kingdoms are geographical expressions, for Abyssinia is now complete.



To-day the ancient kingdoms exist as provinces, and still other provinces, such as that of Harrar, have been added to the empire, as I have before mentioned. Over each province there is a Ras, or Governor-General. Of such was the Ras Makonnen, who, after the Emperor, was the best-known Ethiopian in Europe. These Rases are nominated, transferred, and dispossessed by the Emperor at his will. Each province is subdivided into cantons, of which, broadly speaking, one-half belongs to the Crown. The Crown, instead of paying the provincial governors and functionaries in money, attributes to them the revenues of these Crown lands. Over the private landowners, as the immediate representative of the Government, there is a sort of mayor elected by the people, and called the 'choum.' The great business in life of a choum is to collect the taxes belonging to the Crown. The terms of contracts are agreed to in the presence of the choum, and he dispenses justice of a Solomon-like character upon nine-tenths of the minor difficulties which arise between man and man. Appeal is taken to the court of the Ras, a tribunal of three judges, and from this tribunal to the supreme court of the Emperor.

The Ethiopian Government recognises three sorts of land divisions—Crown lands, Church lands, and private lands. Included under the head of Crown lands are the fiefs controlled by the Crown, the revenue of which is enjoyed by functionaries, as explained before, or applied to the support of the military establishment. These fiefs descend from the Crown to the Ras, who divides them into secondary fiefs. These are again subdivided among the humbler public servants. These fiefs are not hereditary, although it is customary for them to be transferred by the Ras to the sons of their

last possessors. While slavery does not exist, properly speaking, the peasants are virtually in a state of serfdom, with this distinction, that they are not attached to the soil. Private landowners pay a tax in kind of one-tenth of their increase, or one-tenth of the crop, to the village choum. The taxes on Church lands are paid by the tenants to the clergy. Proprietors owe, upon demand, three days of labour every week for the service of the Emperor. While ownership of the ecclesiastical lands vests legally in the Church, they are assigned to individuals, and become, to all intents and purposes, the private property of the individual, upon payment of the taxes imposed by the Church.

Many erroneous statements are made in regard to property rights in Ethiopia, and, indeed, the subject is one not readily comprehensible in all of its phases to the foreigner. There are in the empire two superposed peoples: the one, the conqueror or Abyssinian; the other, the conquered, a subject of whatever race. M. Eugène Carette has made for me a statement upon this subject, which makes the situation clear:

‘Some persons deny that property rights exist; others affirm that they have been safeguarded by careful guarantees. Now, the fact is not open to doubt that property rights are not strongly protected according to European standards, except in those provinces where Ethiopian laws have been enforced through long periods of time, and in such provinces these rights exist and are respected as in Europe, subject to Ethiopian law. In the conquered provinces annexed in our day, the possession of the soil has retained the character which it formerly had, although modified by the vicissitudes of modern political



*Photograph by M. Bertolini.*

THE RAS OUALDO GORCHIS.



fortunes. The fact that the Emperor has for certain reasons parcelled the land out between the inhabitants does not prove that property rights have undergone great modifications. Still, private ownership exists. It is transmissible by sale, inheritance, or donation. Those having rights cannot be dispossessed without judicial process, but in practice a sale, loan, or gift of land to a foreigner will never be permitted without formal sanction of the Sovereign. The conquered provinces constitute in large part the Crown lands, and the Emperor has farms more or less everywhere. These qualifications aside, it may be said that in the desert zone the nomadic existence of the population leaves no place for individual rights. The individual exists only as the member of a tribe. It is the tribe which possesses for all, both pasturage and watering-places—the two great regulators of nomadic life.'

## CHAPTER XVI

### The law of the Fetha Nagast, or fundamental statutes of Ethiopia.

THE Emperor is the sole source of new legislation. Except as he is governed himself by the Fetha Nagast, the force of tradition, and the counsels of his friends, his power is unrestrained. The Fetha Nagast is the basic law of the country, but its principles are laid down in such broad terms that in practice the law of custom is more generally invoked. The parties to a controversy not infrequently resort to arbitration, rather than go before the courts, and they may take as their judge the first traveller encountered, or possibly a child, upon the Scriptural theory that 'out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected wisdom.' The spirit of controversy is strongly developed in every Abyssinian. During our progress to Addis-Ababa we were several times mystified by the discussions of our servants, who, grouped together, appeared to be profoundly interested in argument over some issue utterly incomprehensible to ourselves. These debates turned out to be moot courts, the holding of which is a popular distraction. Every Ethiopian is more or less a lawyer, possessed of a Solomon-like wisdom, and the principles of procedure are so commonly understood that real

lawyers are not highly regarded. The individual may always plead for himself.

The Emperor is the final judge, to whom weighty matters are appealed as a court of last resort. As a matter of fact, he has always at hand his Affa-Nagast, or Supreme Judge of the empire, who relieves him of the actual consideration of nine-tenths of the important litigation which comes up on appeal. In the provinces the Ras stands in the place of the Emperor, and has also superior judges, who receive on appeal causes brought up from the provincial governors. The Emperor does not possess the right to extend clemency to homicides. The latter may sometimes escape, and seek asylum in the churches, as was the case in Europe during the Middle Ages. Good stories pass current regarding Abyssinian justice, as they do in other parts of the world, but should be read with scepticism. This is a sample :

A man and a woman being engaged in a legal controversy, the woman brought the judge a jar of honey. The man brought him a mule. The sentence of the court ran against the woman, much to her indignation.

‘Much good did it do me to bring you presents,’ she exclaimed to the judge ; ‘my adversary has won.’

‘Why dost thou complain?’ replied the judge. ‘A mule has passed by and has kicked thy jar to pieces.’

The recognised written law is not really of Ethiopian origin at all. The Fetha Nagast is, in fact, the rule of the Coptic Church, and is as broad as that Church in its application. It is accepted in Abyssinia as the fundamental law, because the Church is accepted as the true Church, of which the Emperor is the official head. The law was not written either in the Amharic

or in the Ghèze, which is the ecclesiastical language of the empire. The Ghèze, however, closely resembles Arabic, which is the living language of the Coptic Church, and for this reason, the official version of the code exists only in Arabic. From the Arabic an Italian translation has been made recently by Ignazio Guidi. The Fetha Nagast had no complete existence in writing until the middle of the thirteenth century. The author of the code, Al Assad Ibn Al Assal, charged with this task by the Council of Nice, undertook to combine in a single work the scattered fragments of the law, of which only one similar collection had been before undertaken. The materials for this collection are said by the author to have been taken from the Old and New Testaments, the apocryphal apostolic writings, the canons of the first Councils, and canons attributed to St. Hippolyte.

The Arabian author prefaces his work with the following very interesting introduction :

‘In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which are but one God ; with the help of the Lord, and happily by Him assisted, we come to write a preface of the law laid down by the holy Fathers of Greece. May their prayer and benediction and their aid be with all Christians eternally ! Amen.

‘After the termination of the era of the martyrs, when the three hundred and eighteen orthodox Fathers of the Council of Nice were convoked by the Emperor Constantine, this latter said unto them :

“Myself, so far as it may concern me, I do not wish to reign, since it is evident that the way of Christ and the way of the world are different. And it is likewise true that the way of Christ and His precepts have said :



‘Love your enemies, praise them who oppress you.’ This He said, and other things like unto it.

“I conclude from this commandment, which is the second law of perfection, that He orders us to be patient, to support, to pardon, to aid, and to praise our neighbour, and to consider him our equal. Now, how may I conform to the law, and order pains, and the payment of debts when they fall due, without pity, and take vengeance upon the oppressors for the oppressed? Consequently, that which is perfect should perforce destroy and break up that which is imperfect, and consequently the law of our Saviour Jesus Christ has destroyed that which preceded it. But this latter should never be destroyed, since nothing exists in reality more honoured than this law of Jesus Christ, which is the law of accomplishment of duties and of perfection.”

‘Then, when the three hundred and eighteen Fathers heard these words of Constantine, they offered prayer to our Saviour Jesus Christ. . . . Then our Saviour Jesus Christ heard their prayer, and commanded them to seek the book of law in the Old and New Testaments. And this book was written by Ibn Al Assal. They gave it to Constantine, son of Helena, and he reigned in the land of the Greeks; while that before he had this book he did not wish to reign.

‘The sacred books that the faithful will receive as canonical are :

‘*The Books of the Old Testament—to wit :*

‘The Pentateuch, five books.

‘Joshua ; Judges ; Ruth ; Judith ; Kings, four books.

‘Paralipomenon, two books ; Ezra, two books.

- ‘ Esther ; Tobias ; Maccabees, two books.
- ‘ Job ; Psalms of David ; Wisdom of Solomon, four books.
- ‘ The greater prophets : Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, four books.
- ‘ The minor prophets : Hosea, Amos, Mica, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephania, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, twelve books.
- ‘ The wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach for the instruction of youth ; and the Book of Joseph son of Koryon.

‘ *The Books of the New Testament—to wit :*

- ‘ Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts of the Apostles, the Book of Paul, John the Evangelist.’

The Fetha Nagast itself is divided into two parts, the first of which contains the ecclesiastical law and the second the civil law. Some of the extracts which I shall quote from the law shed a great deal of light upon the habits of thought of the Ethiopian people, as, for example, on giving to the poor :

‘ Giving is one of the forms of charity, and it is the art of compassion made with man’s proper substance to give to those who have need, without the desire of reciprocity. . . . Giving is a loan made to God, and equally a transaction certain of advantage with God.’

Concerning the dead :

‘ Assemble without fear in the churches and read the holy books and sing the psalms for them who are asleep in death, and who were of the martyrs and

saints of old, and for your brothers who die in the faith of the Lord. Go before their bier singing psalms. And if the dead was faithful to Christ, David the prophet hath said: "Precious unto the Lord is the death of the just"; also hath he said: "Come, my soul, retake thy tranquillity, because the Lord hath sanctified thee." O bishops, and O laymen, touch we all with care the body of him who is dead, and fear not to be contaminated for this, nor neglect not their bones for such motives.'

In this connection it may be said that the dead are buried within two hours of decease beside the nearest church, and within the enclosure if they have taken Communion. The teskar, or feast after death, occurs forty days later. Here the will is read, or, as is more often the case, if the deceased has made known his wishes to a priest, the latter now discloses the communication. Collateral branches of the family do not inherit. Property without heirs to claim it reverts to the Emperor.

Concerning food, clothing, and trades proper for Christians :

'As to the aliments, nothing is prohibited by the Christian law, except that which is interdicted in the Book of Acts, and in the canons, which say: "It has pleased the Holy Spirit and ourselves not to impose upon you a burden heavier than this, that you cease to eat naturally—that is to say, you avoid absorbing the blood and the body of that which is sacrificed to idols, and the fragments which animals have eaten. These things are interdicted because of the spiritual harm which might result therefrom; because, in asso-

ciating himself with idolaters to eat that which is sacrificed unto idols, the Christian becomes such that he associates with them in the cult of idols . . . but they have not prohibited this as a thing impure, since by nature these are all creatures of God, and there has been written for us in the law a passage which says : " And the Lord saw all that He had made, and it was good." . . .

'Faculty is thus given to abstain from nothing except that which is such as conduces to the corruption of the soul, the corruption of the nature, and the corruption of the body . . . and thus, for example, venomous animals, ferocious and rapacious beasts, with nails and claws, or which nourish themselves with poisons and poisonous plants, which corrupt the mind and body in being eaten.

'If someone thinks that something is impure, that shall be impure for him alone, since everything in itself is pure. But only it is written : " Every man should eat without scandal and without doubt ; and if someone doubts that this be bad, let him not eat of the meat nor drink of the wine, or do anything which may scandalize our brothers, for whosoever eats and doubts is doomed, for he has not done this thing with faith, and all that is not done in faith is sin." '

As to the apparel which may be worn, this is spoken of in the canons under different heads :

'The canons forbid the wearing of costumes with ornaments, collars, and embroideries on the part of the clergy, and they say that ministers in the sanctuary should wear white costumes ; and that the women should not take the costumes of the men, nor the men

those of the women. Men may not wear rings, nor women clothing embroidered with gold, which giveth rise to pride. Monks will wear rough costumes of wool, or like things, such as skins. . . . The priest will not wear the costume of the soldier, or the builder, or the doctor, or the philosopher. . . . The Lord taught His disciples not to possess many garments.

‘As to the habitation, it is meet that it should be limited to that which is strictly necessary, and be in accordance with the evangelical law, which is the law of perfection for those who repudiate passing things, and who seek stable things. . . . As it is meet that food and clothing be as it is commanded—that is to say, solely to avoid the torture of hunger and of cold—so likewise is the precept regarding the habitation—that is to say, it should be useful, sufficient for those who therein assemble, as a shelter. . . . Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath ordered that our fashion of living be based upon His works during His incarnation. . . . He hath told us that He had no habitation, nor place where to lay His head.

‘As to the trades, all is permitted except those which are worldly, which contrast with the spirit of the laws of God, which are : of enchantment, or of making of idols, of execution of objects serving for the cult of idols, and those which evoke the Devil and witchcraft.’

Marriage is held up in the law as necessary, in order to obey the Scriptural injunction to increase and multiply. The marriage of young widows is advised, on the authority of the Epistle to Timothy, as a means of preventing the enemy from finding a lodging-place

in their hearts. In practice, the Abyssinian marriage exists under three forms :

1. The civil marriage, without dower on either side, which amounts to something like free-love. It is followed by frequent divorces, and the formalities are unimportant. The bridegroom visits the parents of the bride, agrees upon the gift which is to be theirs, and takes possession of the person of his choice until such time as it shall please him to return her to her family.

2. The civil marriage with a contract. This takes place before the choum, or mayor. The property of the two contracting parties is specified in his presence, and a partition in the event of future divorce is agreed upon, this agreement being generally to divide the property equally.

3. The most solemn marriage ceremony is the indissoluble religious marriage. It is practised generally among the very great, or those who, being satisfied of the fidelity of their spouses, desire to get into harmony with the precepts of the Church.

The laws regarding liberty, slavery, and enfranchisement are drawn from the Book of Kings :

‘The freeing of slaves is an act of conscience, a thing imposed upon wise persons, since all men should acknowledge liberty, because at the Creation man was born free. But war and raids may cause some to serve others, because it is a law of war that the conquered become the slaves of the conqueror. The Mosaic law made a serving class of infidels and their offspring. It is written: “Let them become your servants, whom you take from the people round about you, and the strangers who live with you.” The

believing servant may not be sold to an infidel. The sons of the slave are the property of the patron, though born of a free father.'

Homicides are classed under two heads, as being involuntary and voluntary. Involuntary homicides do not merit death.

'Thus, the case of a homicide who is bereft of reason, and children of less than seven years, and the drunken man having lost his reason, should not be executed. But the drunken man has lost his reason voluntarily, while the insane and idiots have lost theirs involuntarily; hence the punishment should differ in the two cases. If it is learned that the drunken homicide has not feigned his condition, and that discussion has not taken place between him and his victim, let him be punished as a drunken man, and let his penalty be that inflicted upon an involuntary homicide.'

Death is the penalty visited upon wilful murderers.  
Of stealing :

'It is said in the second book of the Pentateuch : "If the man steal an ox or a sheep, and kill or sell it, let him pay for five oxen, and for the sheep let him pay the value of four sheep. And if the thing stolen be not found in his house, and if he possess nothing, let his labour be sold for the amount of that which he hath stolen. If a man care not for his beasts, and they eat of the grass of another man, let him give the best product of his seed."

'And in the fifth book of the Pentateuch it is said : "If someone be found who has stolen the soul

of his brother, or has excited and aided in the sale of a lost soul, he shall suffer the pain of death."

'If a man enters the church and takes away one of the sacred emblems, let the cross be laid upon him with a red-hot iron ; and he who does likewise outside the church, let him be pursued, and let his head be shaved, and let him be exiled.

'Those who steal free or slave children, or who ravish the country of the domestic animals, our law commands that they be killed or exiled.

'He who steals an animal of another, for the first offence let him be pursued, the second time exiled, and the third time let his hands be cut off, and the animal returned to its owner.

'Whosoever is a chief of brigands and a homicide, let his hands be cut off, likewise the hands of those who aid him.

'Those who steal in a city, for the first time, if they are rich and free, let them pay to the loser the double of the things stolen ; if they are poor, let them be pursued and exiled, and if they repeat the offence, let their hands be cut off.

'Nocturnal robbers visiting dwellings with arms merit death ; and robbers by day, who give fear to the people, and steal from the sacks of grain, and who break bolts, let them be taken before parents, and made to pay for that which is stolen.

'Whosoever steals during a fire, or when a house collapses, or during a shipwreck, and those who fraudulently receive stolen goods, they shall pay four times as much as that which they have stolen.

'Whosoever robs the dead of their clothing, let his hands be cut off. But the law forbids the cutting off of both hands and both feet at the same time.'



While the measures respecting robbery may seem a little Draconian, they have the advantage of being very effective. Theft is so uncommon in Ethiopia as to be practically unknown. The law is executed literally when cases of this kind do occur, as every traveller in Ethiopia can testify. We saw several mutilated persons during our visit, and ascertained that they had paid the penalty established for theft. It is regarded as wiser public policy to visit these severe penalties upon the wrongdoer, and to secure the benefit of the lesson which his mutilated presence in the community gives, than to build expensive jails, the corrective influence of which would be open to question.

## CHAPTER XVII

The Abyssinian Church—The monophysite doctrine—Language and literature—The army—Mobility of native troops.

I MET the head of the Ethiopian Church, the Abouna Matthew, upon several occasions, and found him a courtly old gentleman, deeply interested in garden seeds. He stood among his plants under a huge umbrella, directing horticultural operations, when I first entered his domain, and hastily beat a retreat to his house, where he received me with much courtesy. We were not allowed to enter until the servants had rolled a carpet down the steps, nor were we permitted to leave until his delicious coffee had been served. The old gentleman protested mildly that his people were possessed of a blind faith, but he did not appear to feel any very urgent necessity for making it otherwise, and perhaps under all the circumstances he was right. Even my keen-witted interpreter, himself the nephew of the Etchequié, could shed very little light upon the institutions of the Church, through which the Ethiopian civilization had been handed down through the centuries.

We visited several of the churches, both in town and country, and found them all much alike—roughly-built circular structures with thatched roofs surmounted by Greek crosses. Sometimes ostrich eggs



A WAYSIDE CHURCH—THE CROSS TIPPED WITH OSTRICH EGGS.



were suspended from the tips of the cross. A corridor runs completely around the interior, and here the worshippers gather. The altar is within the central portion of the building. There are usually a number of crude pictures within, representing at least the Virgin and Saints Michael and George, for whom the Abyssinians have a special veneration. If the church is prosperous there are portraits of the Emperor and Empress and representations of miracles.

On one occasion we passed a rural church during a morning celebration and stopped to look on. A boy outside was pounding a drum, and within four other drums were being pounded, there being no attempt at unison whatever. Half a dozen melancholy clerks leaned on staffs that looked like crutches, and rattled what were apparently castanets. In the midst of the din a venerable celebrant chanted, with frequent responses from his assistants. The voices of all were keyed high, and the responses ended in the falsetto wail characteristic of Abyssinian vocal effort. I cannot truly say that the service was in any way impressive, but there were many worshippers who came and went, and all of whom were certainly devout and respectful. What is admirable about the Ethiopian religion is that it is genuine. It may be ignorant belief, but it has the merit of being belief.

Our own presence at this particular church aroused such violent curiosity among the clerical gentlemen that the most of them abandoned the service in order to scrutinize the considerable body of foreigners outside. They were very polite, and evidently accustomed to occasional visits from Europeans. In more remote parts of the country similar visits are likely to arouse some hostility. Professor Littmann, of Princeton

University, who spent seven months or more in and about Axum in 1905-1906 for the purpose of studying inscriptions, told me upon his return that he and his party were threatened with physical violence, and had considerable difficulty in carrying on their work, although they ultimately succeeded to their satisfaction. I may say here incidentally that in Professor Littmann's opinion the true Abyssinian type contains no negro blood whatever, and none of the negro qualities, either physical or mental.

The liturgy of the Abyssinian Church is celebrated in the Ghèze language, which none but the priests understand. While the pastors recite the office in the Holy of Holies, the defteras or lay-readers sing hymns of their own composition in the outer public circle. Meanwhile the populace sing psalms. Communion is administered with both bread and wine. During the year four fasting periods are observed, the longest, one of fifty days, preceding Easter. During this season the use of meat, eggs, and milk is interdicted, and bread and a pepper sauce called chiro are the chief articles of diet.

The Church has its own calendar, and nobody seems to have solved all of its mysteries. I only know that December 27, 1903, according to our calendar was December 17, 1896, at Addis-Ababa. My belief is that each Abyssinian month has thirty days, and that at the end of the year a sufficient number of extra days belonging to no particular month is added on, by which means the total is brought up to 365 or 366 days.

The Christianity of which my respected friend the Abouna is the chief exponent was revealed to the Abyssinians in the fourth century, when a Tyrian

merchant visited their Red Sea coast, accompanied by his sons, or perhaps nephews, Frumentius and Edesius. This, of course, was long before the Moslems had driven them back from the sea. The exemplary young men Frumentius and Edesius were pursuing their studies under a tree while their relative's ship was taking on board water and supplies, and they knew nothing of the attack upon the others of their party—hated as Romans with whom the Abyssinians were at war—until it was all over. The Ethiopian King, Ela Ameda, was so struck by these youths, who possessed all the desirable attributes of the young men of the Sunday-school books, that he caused them to be reared with his own sons. Edesius became a cup-bearer and Frumentius treasurer of the State. Edesius eventually returned to Tyre, but Frumentius remained, and profited by his influence to introduce his own religion. His great desire was to win over to the Church the King himself—Ela Ameda having been succeeded by his son—and thus to become the apostle of the region. Never having received sacred Orders, Frumentius found himself checked in his purposes, and decided upon a visit to Alexandria. At Alexandria Frumentius explained the ease with which enlightened ministers might win over Ethiopia, whereupon St. Athanasius decided that Frumentius himself could best propagate the faith, and thereupon ordained him priest and Bishop of Axum.

The new Bishop returned to Ethiopia, and immediately began the successful conquest of the country to Christianity. Having received his consecration at Alexandria, Frumentius and his converts became followers of the Alexandrian or Coptic Church, and opponents of the Aryan heresy. Constantine's Council

of Nice had recognised three patriarchs—the Bishops at Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch—and the Church of Alexandria, retaining its hold upon Ethiopia after the death of Frumentius, is represented by the Abouna, a sort of Papal Legate, named by the patriarch. The influence of the patriarch of Alexandria, who in our time resides actually at Cairo, is now much reduced ; indeed, the only important function of the patriarch is to name the succeeding Abounas. It is not probable that Abyssinian Churchmen are now or ever have been deeply concerned over the intricacies of dogma and speculative religion, yet it is interesting to know that their Church is the most considerable body of Christians professing monophysitism—that is to say, that Christ possessed but one nature, that of the incarnate word, and that His human body was essentially different from other human bodies.

When the monophysite doctrine was condemned by the Council of Chalcedonia, the Coptic and Ethiopian Churches separated completely from the Roman Church (A.D. 451), and continued to teach that doctrine and the right of circumcision. The Ethiopians admit seven Sacraments, pay homage to the Virgin and the Saints, and have great respect for the dead, the resurrection, the last judgment, purgatory, and other features of the Roman Catholic Church. Periods of prayer and fasting are frequent ; the latter is especially rigorous, involving even abstinence from eating eggs. Occasional doctrinal disputes arise in Ethiopia as elsewhere. In 1898 a preacher maintained that the Holy Trinity really consisted of nine persons, but fifty lashes speedily brought him round to the orthodox way of thinking.

The Abouna, who is also the Archbishop of Gondar





THE PRINCIPAL CHURCH AT ADDIS-ABABA.



and Axum, has the direction of a Guardian of the Tables of the Law, priests, curates, deacons, and scribes, who constitute the national clergy. Then to the regular clergy may be added monks of various Orders, and likewise nuns. A singular addition to the Church organization is the institution of the Ethiage, the Etchequié being scarcely less a personage than the Abouna himself. It appears that in the thirteenth century, when it was decided that the Abouna should always be a stranger, it was also decided to limit his authority to matters spiritual, and to create an Etchequié to administer the temporal affairs of the Church. The wise men of Ethiopia appear to have foreseen exactly the complications which could arise from foreign control both of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church, as illustrated in recent developments in France, and guarded themselves so carefully against any possible foreign domination that to-day in practice the Church is a powerful instrument practically controlled by the Emperor's Government. The present Etchequié is an uncle of Oualdo Mikael, my interpreter, who pointed him out to me, riding upon a white mule with a huge escort, like a general of high degree.

As thus constituted, the Abyssinian Church, like the Abyssinian nation, has withstood all assaults from without and within, from its establishment until to-day. The Church sent a delegation to the General Council at Florence in 1441, before which the Ethiopian priests, accepted as representatives of the mythical Prester John, sustained the Divine nature of Christ, while the Latin Church maintained that He possessed two natures in one. From this incident followed the curious adventure of the Portuguese in

Ethiopia, based upon the wish of the Western King to learn more of this much-talked-of Prester John. The Portuguese Ambassador at Rome sent two delegates to Ethiopia upon the return of the priests who had attended the Council at Florence; but they brought back no news, having found it impossible to speak Arabic or any other language known in the country. The attachment of Portugal for Ethiopia was confirmed, however, and other historical consequences followed. In 1487 John II. of Portugal sent forth Pedro de Covilham and Alphonso de Paiva to find a short route to India. At Aden they heard of a Christian King in Abyssinia, and although they believed that the real Prester John would be found in India, they decided to take no chances, so Paiva started for Ethiopia to investigate, and Covilham continued towards India. Paiva was assassinated, and Covilham, returning from India, penetrated to Ethiopia from Zaila. He was received as an Ambassador, and all went well until he wished to leave, when he found himself a prisoner. The Emperor at that time placed such a high value upon his advice that he made use of a pretended law by which a stranger once having reached the country might not leave. Covilham lived and died in Ethiopia, but was permitted to correspond with his own King, whom he advised to secure an influence in Africa by sending missionaries thereto, who, being installed without hope of returning, would win over the whole country to the Roman Catholic faith.

The King of Portugal charged a number of Jesuit missionaries with this task, and these soon occupied all the eminent posts in the Ethiopian Church, to the great irritation of the less highly instructed native

clergy. Then came the invasion of Abyssinia in 1528 by the Mohammedans, who, under the leadership of Mohamed Gragne, drove the Christians into the highlands. Unconquered, but driven back, cut off from the sea, we may say that from that moment the Abyssinians were deprived of contact with the Western world, until the railroad from Djibouti once more aroused universal interest in their country. In this situation help came from Portugal, in the form of a corps of 500 men led by Christopher de Gama. Father Jerome Lobo recites the valorous deeds of Christopher de Gama, who rendered signal service to Ethiopia, but was eventually betrayed by a Turkish woman whose husband he had killed, and who had pretended to love him. De Gama was horribly tortured, but refused heroically to disclose the whereabouts of the Portuguese, and was finally decapitated. Eventually, with the aid of the Portuguese, Mohamed Gragne was himself killed and his army destroyed, although the Abyssinians have never since recovered their sea-coast possessions. Tradition says that the Moslem General named the province of Kaffa the home of the coffee-plant, whence the name we give to the beverage. Reaching an impetuous river swollen by the rains, he exclaimed, 'Ne Kafi!' (I am afraid), and went no further.

While these events were taking place, the Jesuits sought to effect a complete control of the Ethiopian Church, thus inviting reaction against Portuguese influence. Religious war soon followed, resulting in the expulsion of the Catholic missionaries in 1632 under the Negus Facilidas, since which the Ethiopian Church has continued undisturbed to maintain its own doctrines in its own way.

An affinity has been found between the Ethiopian language and the Assyrian. The former belongs properly, however, to the Semitic domain. There is also some affinity between these tongues and the ancient Himyarite, as well as the modern Mahrah, in Arabia. These points of resemblance are especially apparent in the Ghèze, or ecclesiastical language of the empire. This, in turn, is as closely allied to the modern Court language, Amharic, as modern Italian is to Latin. Amharic will, no doubt, dominate eventually throughout Ethiopia. The linguistic connection between the two sides of the Red Sea seems to agree with the historical connection. The south-west portion of Arabia and Ethiopia had during a long period an almost common history. The existing monuments at Axum have a great resemblance to those of Sanna and Mareb. When the migration from the Yemen to Abyssinia took place is told only by tradition. Prior to the introduction of Christianity the history of Ethiopia is a mere tissue of legends. We only know that the Abyssinians in their turn invaded the Yemen in 528, and remained fifty years. King Aizanas styles himself, in the inscription at Axum, 'King of the Homerites, the Keidans, and the Ethiopians, and of the Sabians.'

The Ghèze resembles Arabic and Hebrew, but the Amharic, although closely related, does not seem to have been derived directly therefrom. After the fourteenth century the Ghèze ceased to be a spoken tongue, and to-day, in addition to its use as the ecclesiastical tongue, it is employed in the preambles to correspondence, the body of which is Amharic.

The literature of Ethiopia is not rich, as it consists

mainly of theological works, liturgies, and books of the saints. The popular literature is little known. The only mention made by Professor Mondon, who spent many years at the Court of the Emperor, under the head of popular literature relates to the funeral odes upon the death of Soubagadis, and certain satires upon the reign of Theodore. Professor Mondon says in his valuable little 'Manual' that these have a 'grand movement,' and although sometimes incoherent and bizarre, have a 'noble Biblical aspect.' He thinks that the azmaris or troubadours, whose melancholy songs and one-stringed lutes were frequently heard about our tents, probably preserve some early traditions that would be interesting to gather.

The Amharic language, or modern Ethiopic, comprises thirty-three letters, each of which has seven distinct characters, or 251 characters in all, including the diphthongs. Each character represents a syllable. The orthography is based upon the pronunciation. Greek or Coptic figures are used, although the Arabic characters are now being introduced.

Conversation invariably begins with a salutation. To an inferior or to an equal one would say, 'How hast thou passed the night?' or morning, or afternoon, as the case might be. To one of exalted station the form would be changed, the nuance being untranslatable. To a woman still another form of salutation would be employed.

The Abyssinians are extremely ceremonious. This applies to their speech and to their correspondence. The protocol or beginning of their letters is always written in Ghèze. The termination is as brief as the introduction is long. In the Abyssinian writings no

paragraphs appear, except at the conclusion of letters, where the phrase begins :

‘Written at — the — day of the month — of the year of grace —.’

Letters are not signed, the signature being replaced by a seal. The Emperor begins his letters with his seal. By exception, he attached his seal to the American Treaty at the end of the last page. The following is the manner in which the Ethiopian begins an ordinary letter :

‘May the message of Atto Gabrou reach Oualdo Miriam. How are you? Myself I am well, thanks be to God.’

To an inferior one would write :

‘May the letter of — reach —.’

To an European whom it is desired to honour :

‘May this letter reach the illustrious and honoured —. How are you? Myself (may God be honoured and glorified in heaven and upon earth) I am well.’

In his letter to the Hon. David R. Francis, President of the Louisiana Exposition, the text of which has been given to the newspapers, and is therefore not confidential, the Emperor said :

[SEAL.]

*‘The Lion of the Tribe of Judah has conquered. Menelik II., by the Grace of God King of Kings of Ethiopia, to the President of the Exposition of St. Louis, greeting.’*

‘I have received the letter that you have sent me through Consul-General Skinner. I am very happy



to hear of your good thought in reserving for me in your Exposition a space for my country. I have in consequence, and in spite of the short time which remains to us, given orders to collect specimens of the products of my country.

‘I pray to God that He will aid you in leading to a good end the great work that you have undertaken.

‘Written the seventeenth day of December, year of grace eighteen hundred and ninety-six, at Addis-Ababa’ (corresponding to December 27, 1903).

The termination of a letter consists in some expressions concerning the health and the sacramental ‘Amen.’

The following is a sample of Abyssinian poetry taken from the royal songs :

‘The face of His Majesty Isaac resembles the gate of Heaven ; it resembles a burning fire ; it resembles an oscillating balance. The face inspires terror, the terrible Isaac.

‘When thine eyelids rise, who will regard thee face to face ? Thine eye will pierce like a lemon, and will scald like an onion, the body of whosoever will regard thee face to face.’\*

This is an extract from a funeral song :

‘Alas ! Soubagadis, the friend of all,  
Remains at Dagga-Choba, by the hands of Oubessat.  
Alas ! Soubagadis, the pillar of the poor,  
He remains at Dagga-Choba, bathed in his own  
blood ;  
The men of the country will remain good,

\* Translated from Professor Mondon's French version.

Because they will eat grain which will have  
germinated in his blood.

In November, at the Feast of St. Michael, who will  
remember

Marie has killed him with five thousand Gallas ?

Who will remember the morsel of bread and the  
glass of hydromel ?

At Dagga-Choba he is fallen, the friend of the  
Christians.\*

The opulent Abyssinian is not born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but with a gun in his hand. From their earliest youth all classes and degrees of the population learn to handle a gun, and aspire to own one, or several if possible. To own a gun is to be a man, and to be a man is to be a soldier. Ergo, the Ethiopians are all soldiers. The imperial army proper consists of active and reserve forces, to which may be added the Emperor's bodyguard, picked troops constantly under arms at Addis-Ababa. Each Ras or Governor-General disposes of a corps of fighting men, proportioned to his importance. These soldiers receive practically no pay, but are wholly supported and armed by the State. The active army consists of about 200,000 volunteers. The territorial, or army of reserve, is organized under the feudal system. Each community owes to the State, in case of war, a certain number of soldiers, equipped, but not armed. They must assemble under the flag with a mule or an ass, and with provisions for one month. Freeholders may hire substitutes, and they frequently do so. The territorial forces amount to about 200,000 men also. The Government is said to possess about 600,000

\* Translated from Professor Mondon's French version.

rifles, although some assert that the number does not exceed 300,000. Individual soldiers do not appear to know how to keep their weapons in proper condition. They include all the best marks, such as the Gras, Berdan, and Lee-Metford. Supplies are distributed throughout the Empire, and the army can be mobilized as readily, probably, as any other in the world.

On the breaking out of war the heralds of the Negus, or Emperor, read out a proclamation in the market-places after the beating of the negarit, or great war-drum. The herald stands upon the drum, with lance and mantle held by a slave at his side. The call to arms is obeyed partly from discipline, but largely from custom and love of war, with its attendant excitement. While stores are transported for a limited period the army expects to live off the country through which it passes. The forces are accompanied by perhaps 20 per cent. of their own number of women, slaves, and camp-followers. When an encampment is determined upon, the red tent of the Negus is first set up, and surrounded by those of his four great chiefs—that is to say, the Dedjasmatch, or chief of corps; the Kagnazmatch, or General of the right; the Grasmatch, or General of the left; and the Fitaurari, or General of the advance-guard. The rank and file arrange themselves as best they can, and in case a stay is decided upon a market is opened. Women and children abound, and the accustomed family life is resumed.

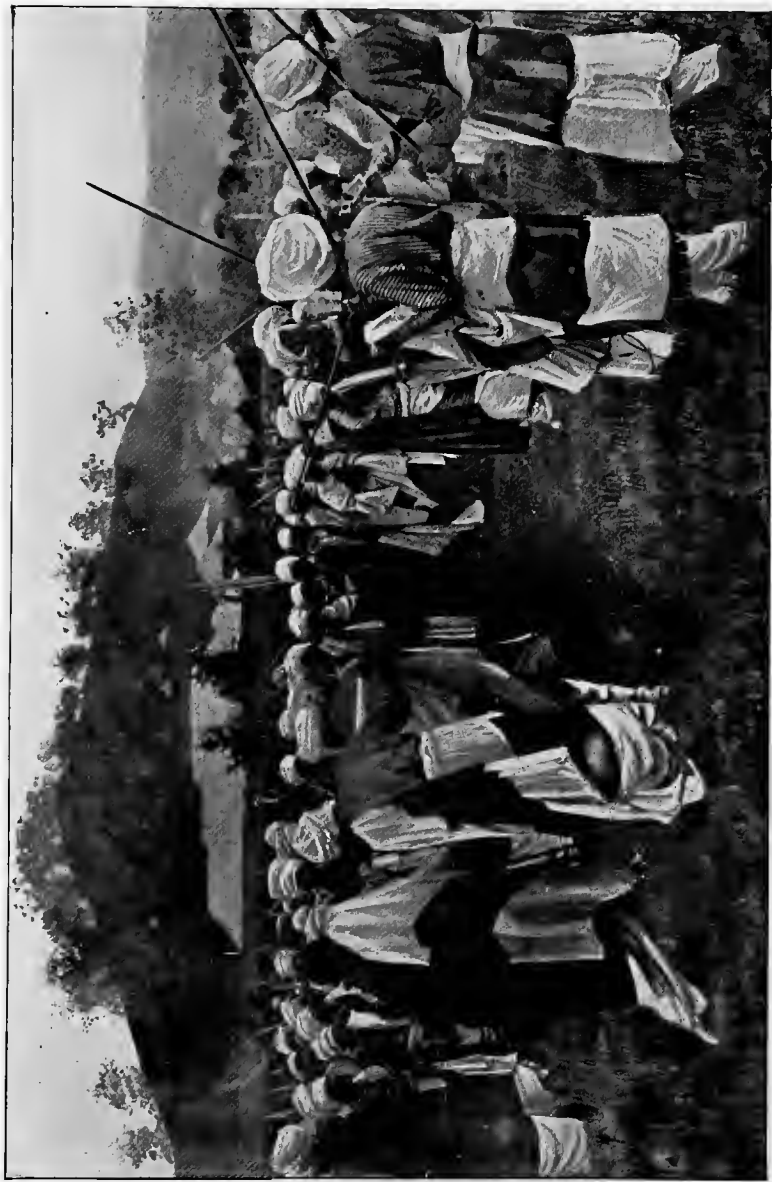
At Adowa, before the great battle, the Emperor's camp comprised three concentric circles. His own tent and that of the Empress were placed in the centre of the first circle, with the immediate personnel of the Emperor on the left, and that of the Empress

on the right. The kitchens were behind the imperial tents. Around the stockade enclosing this camp stood the soldiers of the bodyguard. In the second circle were the tents of the various Rases; the Dadjazmatch, or chief of corps; the Affa-Negus, or 'breath of the King'; the Abouna, or head of the Church. Finally, in the third circle were the tents of the Kagnazmatch, or General of the right; the Grasmatch, or General of the left; and the Fitaaurari, or General of the advance-guard.

Captain Moltado, an Italian soldier who participated in the late war, and was afterwards kept as a hostage, in describing Menelik's army on the march on January 31, 1896, said:

'They did not consist of fighting men only; there were women, grandfathers, lame people, babies, priests, lepers—every kind of individual. "It is not an army," said Paoletti to me at the moment, "it is an invasion, the transplanting of a whole people." They were all crowded one on to the other, amidst donkeys, mules, horses, in the same track. When, owing to the arrival of some chief, they were obliged to make way, they threw themselves indifferently to the right or the left.'

The usual custom of the Abyssinian army is to advance in a half-moon formation, each man fighting with more or less personal initiative. They are fair marksmen, and probably would be better but for a tendency to get their rifle sights out of order. When the battle becomes hot, and the final rush is made, sword and lance come into play, and the war-cries of the ancient kingdoms are raised. 'Together, together!' cry the Choans. 'God pardon us, Christ!' cry the Godjamites. The Gallas, lowest in the social scale, repeat twice, 'Slay, slay!' The troubadours also go into the fight, improvising such songs as this:



*Photograph by M. Bertolini.*

DANCE OF ETHIOPIAN PRIESTS.



‘Brothers, are ye hungry, are ye thirsty? Oh, true sons of my mother, are ye not birds of prey? Forward! Behold the flesh of your enemy!’

‘And I will be a carver of your feast. Forward! If ye lack hydromel, I will give ye my blood to drink.’

Herbert Vivian, the writer of an English book on Abyssinia, says: ‘If Menelik were imprudent enough to quarrel with us, we could invade him from the Soudan at any moment, and in one year, or certainly two, could annex and reorganize his dominions.’ This is perfectly absurd as a statement of military possibility. The war in Somaliland, which lasted over a year, is quite enough to suggest that war with Ethiopia would be not only very costly, but very long. Our own limited experience permitted us to draw some inferences respecting the relative mobility of Ethiopian and Anglo-Saxon soldiery in Africa. For our own small party of twenty-eight men, who carried their own haversacks, we also transported approximately two and a half tons of camp equipage of the regulation sort. We were continually held back by our supply train. Among other effects, our men had a heavy cast-iron stove, which was freighted laboriously from place to place, and the presence of the stove seemed to be essential to the preparation of a satisfactory meal. Our numerous Ethiopian servants and native soldiers carried nothing, except a few sheet-iron pots and pans, and when they had made camp, they had their fires going and their dinner cooking in a marvellously short space of time.

Our officers’ mess, which was independent of that of the men, was provided for by one Mohamed, an excellent cook, who required no stove at all, but was ready to begin his culinary operations so soon as he had

found three round stones, between which he would start a diminutive fire. This Mohamed would rise at three o'clock, prepare coffee and hash or some other palatable dish, and be off on foot with the advance-guard, followed by one small mule carrying his pots and pans. He would cover his twenty or twenty-five miles a day without a murmur, and on foot, the most of the time under an equatorial sun, and upon his arrival at the rendezvous would find his three round stones as usual, and upon them create for our sustenance nightly a soup, two meat dishes and one vegetable dish, and tea.

Mobility apart, there is, of course, no comparison between native and European soldiery, but in Africa this one quality is worth almost more than all others combined ; and when added to moderate fighting efficiency, the conclusion is irresistible that a united Abyssinia would be able to resist indefinitely any ordinary attempt to break down an independence which has withstood assault successfully from every invasion, except that by Arab arms under Mohamed Gagne ; and, of course, the Arabs followed about the same methods as the Ethiopians. If independent Abyssinia falls, that contingency is most likely to result from dissensions among the Abyssinians themselves.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### The Caucasians of Cush

THESE pages do not pretend, of course, to deal with Ethiopian history, except very incidentally, yet even this account of my own journey, and of existing institutions brought to my attention in one way or another, would be to some extent incomprehensible without reference to the most interesting tradition of the empire—that is to say, the tradition according to which Menelik II. is a descendant of King Solomon of old. Now, it is a perfectly patent fact to all observers that the Abyssinian people are of Jewish ancestry. It is perfectly established that the present religion has been grafted upon a root of Judaism, which itself displaced polytheism and idolatry fifteen centuries before Christ. We know that there are at present in the country several colonies of Jews, called Falashas, or exiles, which have been in existence for many centuries; that these Jews possess the Old Testament in the Ghèze language, a volume of extracts from the Pentateuch, with comments given to Moses by God, the Sabbatical laws, a book of secrets revealed to twelve saints, to be used as a charm against disease, and a translation of Josephus. They reject the Talmud and its commentaries. This people regard a house as inhabitable until the blood of a sheep or goat has been spilt within

it, and their priests may marry once, but not a second time. Consequently, when we consider the proximity of Ethiopia to Judea, in connection with the known facts as to Jewish influence in Ethiopia, we find a sufficient basis of proof to clothe the tradition with an atmosphere of extreme probability.

We all remember how the Queen of Sheba went down to the land of Judea to see Solomon. Abyssinian tradition recognises our Queen of Sheba as Makeda, Queen of Ethiopia, born 1020 B.C., and placed upon the throne at the age of fifteen. Her title of Queen of Sheba, according to M. J. Morié, who has gone into this matter with a more solemn enthusiasm than any other writer to my knowledge, appears to come from that of Queen of Hasaba (Queen of the South). He thinks that Saba (Sheba) is a corruption of the name of Hasaba, and that the adventures of this Queen have been confused with those of Balkis, Queen of Saba in Arabia, who, perhaps, became also a wife of Solomon in due time. Inasmuch as Solomon managed to have 700 wives, not to mention 300 concubines, the convictions of M. J. Morié are entitled to a good deal of respect, all the more particularly because his belief coincides perfectly with the prevailing belief in Abyssinia, where historical incidents have been handed from father to son for hundreds of years with remarkable fidelity to fact. At all events, there was certainly a Makeda, Queen of Ethiopia, who governed wisely and well, at a period when the glory of Solomon was known throughout the world.

One of Solomon's Generals, Boulboul by name, had visited the Ethiopian Makeda in her capital, and gave the wise King such a glowing account of her beauty that he resolved to send an embassy to her seat of

government. Boulboul was charged with this mission, and M. Morié declares that he bore a letter written in these terms :

‘In the name of God, clement and merciful. Solomon, servitor of God and son of David, to Makeda, Queen of the South. Let peace be with him who follows the light. Harden not thyself against me. Come and see me, and believe.’

The letter was perfumed with musk and sealed with the royal seal. Notwithstanding which, Makeda declined at first to go to Jerusalem, sending instead to Solomon 1,000 slaves, gold, spices, and amber. Solomon did not wish to accept the gifts, and he returned the Ambassador, with the information that an army would be coming soon to humiliate the Queen’s bad advisers. Then Makeda decided to go to Jerusalem to see Solomon, or, as the Bible puts it, to prove him with hard questions.

The famous Queen had reigned twenty-five years, and was in the full enjoyment of her remarkable beauty. It was not astonishing that she should desire to see the most famous ruler of her time. She departed with great pomp, and entered Jerusalem mounted upon a mule, with a large retinue, and followed by camels bearing presents of gold and precious stones. She was received by the King, who attended her in an apartment decorated with crystal from ceiling to floor. Solomon had arranged for her a throne similar to the one she had left behind, constructed of silver and gold, ornamented with rubies and emeralds. Under the crystal floor could be seen a running brook filled with rare fish, and so cunningly was it all contrived that the Queen believed herself about to cross a stream, and lifted up her skirt. Makeda came prepared to

admire, but what she saw surpassed every idea which she had ever entertained. She was particularly flattered by the delicate attentions showered upon her by a monarch whose keen wit she was able to appreciate. One of the favourite diversions of the Queen was the posing of enigmas, which the King answered with extraordinary readiness. Witnessing the wisdom and the munificence of Solomon, Makeda exclaimed to the King: 'This that I see of you surpasses the renown which had reached me in my home. Blessed be your God, who has placed His affection in you, and who has made you to sit upon the throne of Israel!' Rich presents were exchanged, and several months after Makeda returned into her kingdom, leading with her Azariah, son of the great preacher Sadok, and 12,000 Jews—that is to say, 1,000 from each tribe—commanded by twelve judges.

This journey resulted in the negotiation of a treaty of commerce, in which the port of Mascat is mentioned; it also permitted Solomon to secure from Choa many beautiful horses, and enabled the Kings of Christian Abyssinia later on to declare themselves cousins of Christ, Himself also born of the race of David.

Solomon on his side had not been insensible to the charms of the beautiful Queen, and Makeda responded with an equal affection. The result of this mutual admiration was the birth of Makeda's son Menelik. The Oriental tradition declares that Solomon, struck by the beauty of Makeda, vainly besieged the fortress of her affections. At length, irritated by her resistance, he resorted to strategy. He made her swear to become one of his wives, apparently a relationship of a temporary character, on condition that he could prove that she had stolen something from him. The

Queen, confident of the honesty of her intentions, laughingly made the oath. Some days later Solomon served a highly-spiced dinner, during which neither wine nor water were offered until the dessert was brought on, when strong liqueurs, served in small quantities, were passed among the guests. Makeda, burning with thirst, increased by the alcoholic liqueurs served to her, profited by a moment of inattention, more apparent than real, to hold her glass under a jet of water playing in a fountain near the table. Solomon, who watched her every movement, accused her of theft, and the Ethiopian Queen, prepared to capitulate in any event, now readily consented to the entreaties of Solomon.

The child Menelik, born as Makeda journeyed back to Ethiopia, remained with his mother until he became of sufficient age to go himself to Jerusalem, where he was instructed by wise men and profited by the lessons of Solomon himself. Thus Menelik passed several years at Jerusalem, and when arrived at the age of manhood he was anointed and consecrated as King of Abyssinia in the Temple of Jerusalem, under the name of David, and returned to his mother in the year 964. Numerous Jews and Phœnician artists accompanied Menelik upon his return to his kingdom. M. Morié, who recounts these events, declares that, in case of the reconstitution of an independent Jewish State, an Abyssinian Negus, a direct descendant of Solomon, and who bears the title of King of Sion and of Israel, is already indicated as the Sovereign for the new kingdom.

It is said that Solomon caused copies of the Ark of the Covenant and of the Tables of the Law to be prepared for his son Menelik, which were so like the

originals that Azariah, son of Sadok, who was with Menelik when he set out for Abyssinia, succeeded in substituting the copies for the originals. The substitution, either accidental or intentional, was not discovered until too late, and Azariah deposited the precious relics in the church at Axum. It is pretended—perhaps one should not insist upon the evidence—that one of these original Tables of the Law is guarded and venerated at Axum until this very day.

From the time of Solomon we find that the list of Kings of Abyssinia contains many Jewish names, and there is enough in favour of the Ethiopian claim of the present Menelik's direct descent to make it quite comprehensible. As for the tradition in regard to the Queen of Sheba, I hope that no historian will come along to demolish it with proofs of incontestable authenticity.

## CHAPTER XIX

Trade and commerce—Agriculture—The home of coffee—  
Economic development.

THE practical question whether it has been worth while to establish friendly relations with Ethiopia has been answered already to some extent in the course of an explanation in regard to the motives which prompted the organization of the expedition. The present total amount of foreign trade of Ethiopia is not great. Exports and imports united give a total of frs. 12,000,000 (\$2,316,000), of which the share of America amounts to \$1,389,600, a sum more flattering to the national vanity by its relative proportions than by its intrinsic importance. Of this total trade, American cotton goods come in for frs. 3,000,000 (\$579,000), and on the exporting side we receive in the United States, from Abyssinia and Somaliland together, skins and hides to the value of frs. 3,500,000 (\$675,000), and coffee to the value of frs. 700,000 (\$135,100).

No officially established statistical tables will support these facts, as our cumbersome American habit of importing and exporting through numerous middlemen has the effect of confusing the true state of trade with the total returns of Aden, London, and Liverpool. However gratifying may be the actualities of Ethiopian commerce with the United States, we naturally look to

the future to develop a now non-existent commerce of really important volume. Whether that development will take place depends upon such a variety of circumstances that it would be useless to dwell long upon them here. The two great obstacles to the increase of American trade at present are—

(1) The absence of American navigation lines assuring rapid, direct, and cheap transportation ; and

(2) The absence of American business firms in Ethiopia capable of representing our interests.

In this connection I may quote the following extracts from a private letter addressed to me by an acquaintance, and received since my return :

‘ At this moment a German commercial movement seems to be taking form. The repeated visits of German merchants announces this movement as serious.\* We must avow the superiority of these people as commercial travellers. The son of Mohamed Aboubaker said to me: “ Since the cotton cloths are so cheap in America, why does no American come here to sell to us ? He would make a fortune quickly.” This is also my own opinion. This is a country where one sees only the tangible things. In my humble view, a simple warehouse or store at Diré-Daouah would do more for American trade than all the Expositions put together. It would soon become known throughout Abyssinia.’

The Abyssinia of to-day is one of the few remaining lands of romance and adventure—a land of grave faces, elaborate courtesy, classic togas, and Biblical civilization. Gibbon said that, ‘ encompassed by the enemies

\* This was written within a few weeks after my own return. Since then a German official mission has been received in Abyssinia, and several German private parties have likewise visited the country.



of their religion, the Ethiopians slept for near one thousand years, forgetful of the world, by whom they were forgotten.' They were cut off from communication with the over-sea Christians by a belt of lowland, inhabited by savage tribes, with whom they were constantly at war. These tribes have now been brought under subjection, regular trade routes have been opened, and the isolation of the past is over. The present generation will probably live to know whether or not this population, which has kept alive its faith and its traditions through 2,000 years, is capable of advancing to our Western standards.

When the Queen of Sheba, the Emperor Menelik's pseudo-ancestor, went down to see Solomon and to prove him with questions, she took with her presents of spices and gems and gold. There are still spices and gems and gold in Ethiopia. The perfumes of Araby the blessed blow also over Ethiopia. The gems we saw were scattered over the desert waste, washed down from the mountains above. There were quartzes of all kinds and colours. M. E. Lebertois, a hospitable friend of Diré-Daouah, who goes about the country with a little hammer, and who has shelves and shelves filled with his specimens, has shown me crystals which he says suggest diamonds, and he has also specimens pointing to rubies, opals, and emeralds. As for copper, iron, and the ordinary ores, their extraction is merely a question of finding facilities for shipment, and, probably more important still, a market capable of absorbing them.

Gold is hidden away in the mountains in quantities which can be estimated by no existing data. Even now the annual production of gold, by methods as old as Moses, amounts to probably \$500,000. We bought

specimens of this native gold, and it is a trade regularly followed by a numerous class of merchants. The Emperor is a wise man in his generation, and is currently believed to regard as considerably less important the development of the gold deposits of the empire than the cultivation of his fertile tablelands. My interpreter told me that his late 'master,' M. Comboul, had discovered petroleum in large quantities, and that the Emperor had all M. Comboul's carefully prepared reports. The development of this and other resources is for the relatively distant future, when not only the one railroad now building, but others only dreamt of, shall have been constructed.

Actually, the hope of the country depends upon agriculture. Surely a bountiful Providence has smiled upon these children of Africa. It has given them a climate and a soil which produce two, and even three, crops per year. Nearly every grain can be grown in Ethiopia that will grow anywhere. The climate is salubrious, and the heat not oppressive. The rainy season is by no means severe. In the low valleys malarial influences prevail before and after the rainy season, but, generally speaking, the country is healthy. In the highlands the cold becomes intense at night. There are three seasons—the cold from October to February, the hot from March to June 15, and the wet from June 16 to September 30. The wet season equalizes the temperature, increases fertility, and plays an important part in the annual overflow of the Nile. During the wet season violent storms are of daily occurrence. They burst out usually at night, and in a few hours dry beds become torrents, which subside as quickly as they arise. In January there is a season of 'little rains.' The result of this distribution of the

water is that verdure springs up like magic twice a year, to fatten the millions of sleek zebus with immense horns—the sacred cows of the menagerie.

The agricultural implements employed are of the most elementary type. The plough is a mere crooked stick, the point which enters the ground being sometimes covered with iron. It cuts the soil, but does not turn a furrow.

The empire as a whole rises from a low and arid district bordering on the Red Sea, and consists of a series of tablelands, broken by mountain ranges. These tablelands have from 6,000 to 9,000 feet of altitude. The mountains reach from 12,000 to 13,000 feet, and in Siemen some peaks are said to be 15,000 feet above the sea-level. For agricultural purposes the empire may be divided into four zones. The highest zone, the altitude of which is above 7,500 feet, is formed of plateaux broken by mountains, which are frequently crowned by still other tablelands. Here the temperature varies, but rarely goes above 17° C. The highest portion of this zone is poor in all respects. Except for a little barley and wheat, nothing is cultivated. The lower portions are thickly wooded with large trees. Here grows the famous couso, from which the well-known tæniifuge is obtained. As the Ethiopians are fond of a diet of raw meat, which is presumed to give rise to tænia, the tree is really indispensable to their peace of mind and body.

The middle agricultural zone varies in altitude from 4,500 to 7,500 feet. The temperature varies from 14° to 30° C. It is remarkable for its virgin forests, rich pasture-lands, and torrential streams. It is the finest part of the country.

The inferior zone, or Koualla, is watered by large

streams, which lose themselves in the sand before they reach the coast, and is subject to no important agricultural exploitation other than stock-raising.

Finally, the desert zone is reached, through which flows the Hawash River, tracing a green ribbon of radiant verdure across its arid steppes. Here the sun is very strong. The temperature reaches  $75^{\circ}$  C. in the sun, and never descends below  $22.9^{\circ}$  C. Yet even in this so-called desert zone, when the water does reach it, like our south-western deserts, it becomes at once productive in the highest degree.

The empire suffices unto itself agriculturally at present, but it also possesses great interest to the outside world, not merely by reason of its possibilities, but because of its present importance as a coffee-growing centre.

The story of the introduction of coffee into the great world is interesting. The Arab historians relate that the Caid Omar Djidda, a resident of the Arabian Yemen, fell gravely ill. A holy marabout, by name Sidi Ahrem Ahman, advised him to drink an infusion from the fruit of a plant which grew among a black people far beyond the sea. The holy man left Arabia, and after an absence of one year in Ethiopia, he returned, bringing back the seeds of the coffee-plant, with which he cured the Caid. The Caid then proposed to cultivate the plant in Arabia, which determination proved that the Caid had a capable head for business, as Arabian coffee retains to this day such prestige that the Harrar coffee, which is said to be the original Moka, and quite as good, if not better, is industriously mixed at Aden with the Moka of Arabia, or, as is frequently the case, is sold as Moka without any mixing at all.

The Ethiopian tradition respecting coffee differs from the Arabian. At Harrar they say that coffee really came into Ethiopia from the Orient, having been brought thither by one Zis Kameer, a companion of the Wandering Jew. Still others say that Amir Nour, who swept through the country with fire and sword 421 years ago, brought his coffee with him from Arabia. But if he did so, his Arabian coffee might very likely have been traced back to its original habitat in Abyssinia.

The weight of testimony seems to be in favour of Ethiopia as the original home of the coffee-plant. There are in the country to-day two distinct types of coffee. There is the famous long-berry, remarkable for its lengthened form, and there is the coffee imported at Harrar directly from the province of Kaffa. The difference between these types is such that M. Eugène Carotte, who practises medicine and studies agriculture at Diré-Daouah, reaches this conclusion: 'It is natural to believe that the first variety has developed from an importation from Arabia, and that the changes of climate have distinguished it from its prototype.'

The Kaffa bean has also deviated from its original type, but, not having the fineness and aroma of the long-berry or Moka, may be presumed to spring from indigenous stock. The two coffee types tend to mix in consequence of successive hybridization. The very word 'coffee' carries confirmation of the idea that the original home of the plant is the province of Kaffa. The present exportation of coffee from Ethiopia amounts to \$814,000 annually.

Now that all the world is talking about cotton-growing, it is worth while noting that cotton has been

grown in Ethiopia for many years, the product being manufactured in the country. This fact has inspired half a dozen French cultivators to undertake cotton-growing upon a large scale, and while it is very early to pronounce upon their work, they have had such success that others are about to copy them, and systematic efforts will doubtless be put forth to make Ethiopia an important cotton-growing region. M. Carette tells me that he rather thinks that Ethiopia sent cotton to Egypt in prehistoric times, and that the sweet cotton, or tout, and the hard cotton, or fate, are both native plants. He adds, too, that American seed has been imported into the country by way of the Soudan, to which it was carried by the modern Egyptians. The crop of Ethiopian cotton is wholly manufactured in the country. It is woven upon hand-loom into beautifully soft and silky fabrics made up in strips with wide red borders at both ends, and sold as chammas. These chammas have been worn for centuries, so the cotton industry in Africa may be said to antedate that of America by an incalculable period.

It is one of the oddities of trade that an article manufactured in the country of domestic material is also the principal article of import. Our cheap American sheetings have become an article of prime necessity in spite of domestic manufactures. Owing to the numerous hands through which our products pass before they reach the final consumer, a piece of goods thirty yards in length, the cost of which is 87 cents delivered in Abyssinia, reaches the petty merchants at prices varying from \$1.95 to \$2.70. These goods are sold by merchants who buy up the coffee crop, with the consequence that they

offer as little as possible, in order to obtain their coffee at low prices. The results are disastrous to a business capable of great extension.

Another interesting trade in Ethiopia is that of ivory. This business is almost entirely in the hands of the Emperor, who receives annually from 35 to 40 tons. There is also an annual export amounting to about 30 tons gathered up by private shippers. The Emperor receives not only all the ivory captured for his own account, but one-half of that obtained by private hunting-parties. The export of ivory from Ethiopia decreased in value from \$156,330 in 1902 to \$131,240 in 1903. This diminution can be attributed to the many elephant hunts organized under the temptation of high prices for ivory, and which would have resulted in the complete extinction of the species but for the Emperor's happy inspiration to interdict these hunting-parties without special authorization. It will be a number of years, however, before exportation again reaches the figure of \$252,830, which was reached in 1900. The tusks are sold by weight, after having been classed according to diameter. Large tusks, the weight of which is superior to 7 pounds 10 ounces, are worth at Aden from \$48.25 to \$67.55 per measure of 36 pounds. Purchases are made by units of 36 pounds. Tusks weighing less than 7 pounds 10 ounces, and more than 4 pounds 10 ounces, bring from \$1.35 to \$2.89 per kilogramme of 2.20 pounds. Finally, tusks of less than 4.08 pounds bring from 77 cents to \$1.35 per kilogramme of 2.20 pounds.

The elephant, rhinoceros, and hippopotamus are still numerous in various parts of the empire. Lions of moderate size are found in the wooded mountains, and of a very much larger size in the warm plains.

Leopards of enormous proportions are found in the neighbourhood of Boulga and Ankober. The guepard, lynx, hyena, wolf, wild dog, and jackal may be encountered very generally. The droves of buffalo, almost destroyed by the bovine pest in 1897, are now multiplying rapidly. In the western part of the empire giraffes are occasionally encountered. The ostrich, of a very fine variety, is common. The zebra is met with on the plains of moderate altitude, and the wild ass in the rocky mountains to the north. Antelopes and gazelles of every conceivable variety and in great numbers are found everywhere. In the region of Hawash River we frequently saw as many as 50 or 100 antelopes moving together. Among the more notable varieties are the bubalus, koudou, orix, and gnu. Many species of the chamois are also found, more or less everywhere, among which is a diminutive species, known locally as the dig-dig, the weight of which rarely exceeds 10 pounds. Included in a long list of other animals frequently encountered are the boar, the wild dog, badger, marten, hedgehog, and many others which have not been studied.

Among the birds of Ethiopia are included the bustard (giant, medium, and small), guinea-fowl, the red partridge, heath-cock, partridge, grouse, *Perdix Damascena*, pigeons and doves, duck, teal, curlew, and woodcock. Among the birds of which the plumage is sought are the marabout, crane, heron, blackbird, parrot, jay, and humming-birds of extraordinary brilliancy. Birds of prey include varieties of the eagle family and the vulture. The thousands of varieties of insects and butterflies would delight the scientific student. Very few classifications have been made.



Stock-raising, including beef, sheep, and goats, is by far the most important industry of the empire. The Ethiopian steer or zebu possesses a fatty hump, and attains excessive weight, animals of average quality ranging from 770 to 880 pounds. The prices are very low, as there is no export market. The flesh of the goat is very much preferred to that of the sheep, and it really seems to be more delicate and palatable. They are exceedingly cheap, being purchasable at from 38 cents to \$1.54 each. The sheep of Abyssinia is of the fat-tailed variety, peculiar also to Syria. The dominating breed is white in colour with a black head. The meat is excellent. None of the varieties ordinarily seen have any fleece, and no attempt seems to be made to introduce a wool-bearing species. In the province of Menz a race of very small black sheep, the flesh of which is particularly fine and desirable, is raised for wool. The clip is taken up locally, for the manufacture of coarse cloaks worn in the cold climates. The price of a sheep varies from 38 cents to \$1.93.

The political history of Abyssinia has been so much more interesting than its economical development in recent years that little or no attention has been given to the fact that the empire is just now rapidly recovering from a series of disasters, which would have submerged a country less fortunate in natural resources. While the Emperor was perfecting his policy of centralization and organization an epidemic of cholera spread through the country in 1890, causing fearful mortality. Famine followed the epidemic, and two years later an epidemic of epizootic destroyed nearly all the herds of the country. This malady raged for three years with such virulence that even the antelopes of the desert frequently died. It was estimated that

not more than 7 or 8 per cent. of the animals of the country were saved. And then, as if this were not enough, while the cattle died like flies from the epizootic, the farsin of Africa—a form of infectious pneumonia—attacked the mules and horses, and finally upon the heels of these afflictions came the fall in the price of silver throughout the world.

The standard of value in Ethiopia then, as it is to-day, was the Maria Theresa thaler, which ranged in value from 87 to 96 cents. From that high level the thaler has fallen as low as 39 cents, and is but little above that price to-day. Here was a clear loss of 50 per cent. of the cash capital of the country. With the fall in the price of silver came the decline in the coffee market, and, in combination with these developments, a war with Italy supervened in 1896. Since 1897 the business current has resumed its progressive movement. Matters were moving favourably until the activity of various foreign commercial houses in Ethiopia resulted in the acquisition by them of monopolies for the sale and purchase of coffee, hides, skins, and cottons. The needs of the Government were great, and it was represented that the imperial revenues would be increased by granting these concessions. The concessionnaires paid fixed sums into the Government for their privileges, and in addition thereto the regular import and export duties. While the public revenues were thus temporarily increased and to some extent secured, the possession of these monopolies enabled the holders to become so exacting that the volume of business was reduced, and commercial enterprises discouraged. The Emperor was happily advised in time to avert a severe financial crisis. A practical experience with these monopolies

demonstrated to his entire satisfaction the wisdom of giving to trade the greatest possible measure of freedom. The edicts according these monopolies were rescinded, and commerce may now be engaged in without let or hindrance by anyone.

The general commercial situation is steadily improving, and the upward movement is likely to continue very strikingly with the extension of the railroad from Diré-Daouah to Addis-Ababa.

## CHAPTER XX

Our leave-taking—Tact and consideration of the Emperor.

THE visit paid to the American encampment by the Emperor was the certain signal that our serious business discussions were practically over, and that we might prepare for our homeward journey. We had been now long enough in Ethiopia to appreciate what M. Chefneux called ‘the perfect freedom of the life,’ and we contemplated the return journey across country with real pleasure. We had at first determined to leave the city before Christmas Day, but a cordial invitation to celebrate that occasion under the hospitable roof of the British Chargé d’Affaires led to a slight readjustment in our plans, for which we were amply repaid. Our long absence from our accustomed surroundings made it more than delightful to receive a genuine British welcome. After dinner we met incidentally one of the most singular human types in Ethiopia, in the person of Minister Harrington’s interpreter, McKelvey. This individual, of Irish birth, had drifted into Abyssinia about the time of the British invasion in 1868, where he was left behind. He was then a young boy, and proceeded to grow up in the country, becoming to all intents and purposes an Abyssinian. He was perforce obliged to adopt the costume as well as the language of the

country, and finished by losing every characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon, except his name and his auburn complexion. When Minister Harrington first went up to Addis-Ababa, having need of an interpreter, he found this man, who had all but forgotten his mother-tongue. Little by little his native language came back to him, and he became a useful and trusted employé of the Legation.

Our expectation to leave for the coast the day after Christmas could not be carried out for various reasons, and, indeed, it was not until Sunday, December 27, nine days after our arrival, that we left the city behind us. Before taking leave of the Emperor, he had expressed his desire to send some token of friendship to the President. This token arrived one fine afternoon, with numerous distinguished persons in charge, and attended by some thousands of able-bodied citizens. The gifts consisted of a pair of superb elephant tusks, each 8 feet in length and 384 pounds in weight, and two beautiful little lions, eight months old and as playful as kittens. After my return to Europe he sent a number of other valuable zoological specimens to Washington. The tusks excited the greatest admiration, and were the more remarkable from the fact that they had been taken from the same animal. The Emperor's generous intentions did not stop here, for there were also remembrances for each of the officers, consisting in every case of two lances, a decorated buckler, and a sword of honour. The swords bore the arms of the Emperor himself. The decorated bucklers were particularly appreciated, as we had frequently admired these picturesque adjuncts of the distinguished Abyssinians' costumes, and had been unable to procure

any in the market. Our investigations proved that it was unlawful for any Abyssinian to own or carry any but a plain leather shield, the Emperor reserving to himself the right to confer the decorated shields as rewards for merit or for personal distinction. With the lions we inherited two handsome young Ethiopians from the Emperor's palace, who were to care for the little beasts until we should reach the railroad.

Owing to the addition of this live-stock to our party, we were under the necessity of changing all our plans very radically at the last moment. It had been our desire to return eastward by the mountain route, with mule transport. While we found plenty of mules for hire, there was none willing to approach within 100 feet of our lions, so that in the end, as a means of getting them to the coast, we had to fall back upon our old Arab friends, who with their six camels were still in town. As the camels could not travel across the mountain trail, we had to resign ourselves to retracing our steps over precisely the route by which we had arrived.

While these circumstances can be dismissed in a paragraph or two, the arrangements themselves were not completed without much vexation of spirit. The contract for transporting most of our belongings, aside from such as were to be loaded upon the camels, was awarded to a certain negadi, as the director of a mule caravan is called. The contract was closed after protracted parleying, extending over several days. The negadi proved to be as much a man of his word after he had once started as he was exasperating during the preparatory period. As usual, these preliminary difficulties were not so much

a matter of price as of agreement with respect to speed and camping-places.

I strongly suspect that the worthy negadi was not as deeply interested in the points at issue as he was in exercising his talent of driving a bargain. At all events, he became so annoyingly dilatory and uncertain that at the critical moment Lieutenant Hussey, driven to desperation, literally bundled him out of our compound, rather than continue the wordy controversy without end. It was supposed that relations with the negadi had thereupon been dissolved, but not at all; the negadi returned some hours later, declaring that he thoroughly liked this American way of negotiating, and that the terms might now be considered agreed upon.

The final audience with the Emperor was fixed for Sunday afternoon, December 27. We had already exchanged farewells with the many good friends of the week, and we had devoted the few remaining hours to disposing of a part of our surplus among the army of retainers of high and low degree. It is difficult to harmonize expectation and stern realization in cases like this, and especially when the word has been passed round that one is the representative of the richest Government in the world. However, there was a great deal of *isshéing* on every hand, and bending to the earth, which indicated that the general results were upon the whole satisfactory. Our camping material had been started on to Shola about noon, and when the entire American party left for the Guebi at half-past three, the Arab camel-men were charging their six camels with our personal effects.

The entire party cantered to the imperial palace, accompanied by M. Chefneux, arriving in half an

hour. His Majesty received the Americans in the small audience-chamber, surrounded as usual by the numerous high officers who always attend him. The sailors and marines stood at attention directly opposite the throne. The serious business of the hour was to affix the official seals to the treaty, which had previously been drafted in the Amharic and French languages, these two versions appearing in parallel columns upon the parchment sheets sent for the purpose by the American Government. The assembled sheets were bound with ribbon in a cover of blue and gold, lined with satin and bearing without the arms of the United States. These covers were again enclosed in black leather cases.

As the actual comparison of the two copies of the treaty had preceded the audience, nothing remained to be done except to affix the signatures and seals. His Majesty never signs any documents, attaching instead to his letters his seal impressed with black ink, and to formal documents the great seal of State. A white-robed secretary appeared with the formidable instrument by which this is imposed, and, placing it on the floor, stamped the lion of Ethiopia under the sign manual of the President's Commissioner.

Now our specific mission had been performed, and apparently as much to the satisfaction of our Ethiopian friends as to ourselves.

When the real task of the afternoon had been performed, I handed to the Emperor, as a souvenir of the occasion, a bronze bust of Washington. Not to be outdone in this manner, he had brought in at once the decorations intended for the members of the party. There were two incidents connected with these decorations which are illustrative of Menelik's



character. Before we had been long in the capital, M. Chefneux had said one day: 'The Emperor desires to give decorations to the officers of your party, and medals to each of your men. He knows that you cannot under your form of Government accept these decorations without referring the matter back to your higher authorities; but he wants to have the pleasure of offering them, as he would not wish to have it even suspected by others that honours of this kind, which he sometimes bestows on official visitors, had been omitted in your case.'

His Majesty personally handed the medallion and ribbon of the Star of Ethiopia to each of the five officers present, leaving that task to the Grand Chamberlain when it came to the turn of the men. The text of the patent accompanying the decorations reads:

'The Lion of the Tribe of Judah has conquered. Menelik II., chosen of the Lord King of Kings of Ethiopia. To all who see these presents, greeting! As the kingdoms of the earth decorate the doers therein for their discernment, their intelligence, their valiance, and their ability, so we decorate —, — class officer, in our order of the Star of Ethiopia, the insignia of which he has our permission to wear upon his breast.

'Written in our city of Addis-Ababa the 17th day of December, A.D. 1896' (being December 27, 1903, modern style).

After all our soldiers had stepped forward, saluted, and retired, it was noticed that two medals still remained on the silver dish from which they had been distributed. Now, it had been mentioned quite

casually to the Emperor on the day of our arrival that two of the soldiers had been returned to their ship immediately after reaching the railway terminus on account of illness. I had completely forgotten having ever spoken of this matter until the Emperor pointed to these two remaining medals, and said :

‘Two of your American soldiers could not come any further than Diré-Daouah with you on account of being sick. I don’t want them to be left out of this little ceremony. It marks a beginning in our relations which will have some place in history. So I wish you to take these medals back with you, and present them in my name to the two sick men as souvenirs of this occasion.’

It seemed to me that as an evidence of kindly thought and tact this occurrence is worthy of permanent record. The decorations conferred upon the commissioned officers of the United States present have been since deposited in the Department of State at Washington, as the statute requires.

We all shook hands and exchanged congratulations. Next our soldiers presented arms and disappeared. Then the officers bowed low and followed. Scarcely had we left the imperial palace than one of the gentlemen-in-waiting overtook us to ask, on behalf of the Emperor, if we did not wish to see his lions before departing. So courtiers and Americans made a last tour of the Guebi to see the splendid pair of lions in the garden of the Empress’s villa, after which the members of the mission sought their mules.

As we prepared to set out upon our long journey, Ethiopians seemed to spring from every corner of the Guebi to say good-bye and wish us well. Such as had horses and mules accompanied us a number of miles

into the country, M. Chefneux at their head. They rode with us until we reached the first deep ravine beyond the city, and there waited until our party dissappeared in the distance. With us marched numerous servants from the palace, carrying on their heads huge jars of tedj, which the Emperor had specifically ordered to be in readiness for us at our several encampments. We turned frequently to see the sun set behind the city, where our portion had been one of great consideration, and when last we looked it made an aureole, such as one sees only near the equator, all around the Guebi on the highest hill.

## CHAPTER XXI

The journey homeward— Suggestions in regard to caravan organization—Breaking-up at Diré-Daouah—Once again in Djibouti.

OUR return to the coast was uneventful. The first night, which we passed at Shola, was the most exciting, or, to be accurate, the most trying, of all. We had been obliged to trust more to Providence than to ourselves to see that our effects reached the chosen spot, having ourselves left for our rendezvous at the palace before all the baggage had been started from the compound of the Ras Oualdo Gorghis. The mulemen had lived up to their contract, preceding us to Shola with the tents and the most of the men's supplies, but the camel-drivers, who had charge of the officers' personal belongings and mess, were nowhere to be seen when we arrived in camp. It was a painful situation, for it was late, and we were all hungry. Furthermore, we were in full dress, and without overcoats, and a cold wind swept over the plain. There was no wood to be had, and no refuge from the sharp night air. Manifestly, five highly-decorated Americans, who had just said good-bye officially to the King of Kings, could not now return to seek temporary lodgings. Hence we wrapped ourselves in our dignity, having nothing

better at hand, and nourished ourselves from a large can of baked beans belonging to the men's stores. At ten o'clock Mr. Hussey and Mr. Wales with some servants returned to the city to investigate, and those who remained behind undid bundles of leopards' skins, in the vain hope of being able to keep warm under them, and waited as philosophically as possible. At two o'clock the search-party returned with blankets and bedding, and the further information that the delay had resulted from the escape of the small lions just as the camels were about to move. It being dark before the animals were recaptured, the Arabs had decided to go to sleep. What we were to do was a subject of minor consideration.

The President's lions gave us no end of trouble throughout the journey. Our professional trainers nearly killed them both with kindness, in the form of too much food, and one little fellow did die while we were crossing Mount Asabot. The grief of the lion-men was most pitiful, and indeed we were all depressed by the circumstance, as the two animals were playful and gentle as kittens. The survivor, Ambesa, moped for several days, but in the end recovered health and spirits, and reached Washington some months later, where he has become a large and vigorous member of the national collection.

The domesticated lion in Ethiopia is almost a sacred creature, and in the event of death custom requires that it shall be buried with ceremony. In the case of our own lion, a grave was prepared, the body wrapped in a chamma, and laid away in the presence of all our Abyssinian servants.

Our journey homeward was incomparably more satisfactory than the one to Addis-Ababa. We were

in excellent physical condition ourselves, our camp organization was better, and probably the thought of having accomplished that for which we had come had not a little to do with it.

The recrossing of the dreaded plains of Fantallé was now a pleasure which looms up among the clearest impressions of an eventful four months. This time we committed no such error as to set forth under an equatorial sun, but rested quietly at Tadechemalka until three o'clock, and managed to pass the rough and dangerous places before twilight. When the huge red sun prepared to disappear, the air became at once cool and refreshing, and the breeze brought with it a faint and barely distinguishable perfume. Wolves streaked half curiously, half fearfully, across our path as darkness settled down, hyenas howled, and strange sounds came from all around. We passed large herds of grazing camels, which, sniffing the white man, seemed disposed to stampede, but, thinking better of it, returned to their grazing once more. Dozens of long caravans, coming from the other direction, passed us, and in our blind efforts on both sides to hold to the narrow trail through the long dried grass camels and mules had many a collision, in which we could always distinguish the clatter of our unwieldy tent-poles and the rattle of our sugar and bread cans. Then would come a halt, and out of the darkness would issue shrill Abyssinian exclamations and Arabian objurgations, which ceased only when an old-fashioned Yankee 'Damn!' could be heard in the storm centre, and then things would be set straight again. Finally, when the blackness became so dense as to bear down upon our spirits with something of the weight of physical oppression, the stars

came out as quickly as the sun had disappeared, and on the distant slopes of Mount Fantallé 'lion fires' burst upward, showing where the shepherds minded their flocks, and wished to frighten the wild beasts away. So we knew that we were not alone, and that off in the distance there dwelt men, clad in skins, who had their ambitions, their hopes and fears, as we had, bounded by the mountains on the one hand and the desert on the other. Watching the lion fires, we saw a new one on the very sky-line of old Fantallé, and this new one shot higher and higher, bathing the whole ridge with light, and then, leaping upward, disclosed itself—the moon!

Now we could distinguish the caravans passing our own, for traffic across the plains is largely suspended during the daytime, and resumed in the cool of the night, with the moon to show the way. Mules, mules, mules, never have I seen so many mules, their owners huddled up in their chammas, too nearly asleep to proffer the salutation of the road. But for that matter, we none of us spoke much after the sun had set. The mysterious spell of an African night leaves one speechless, with a vague consciousness of an invisible chorus singing Addison's hymn of the firmament, telling its story to the listening earth.

We camped about ten o'clock, and the following morning at three we were off again. Between this spot and the Hawash River our hunters had their most memorable day. It is really almost unbelievable the scores, the hundreds, of gazelles and antelopes that we saw, peering at us anxiously, then turning and flying across the plains. We dined well that night on the pleasant banks of Katchinhaha.

We had been handicapped from the very start by

the absence of any data upon which to base an effective organization. We had no official or unofficial agents, either in Abyssinia or Somaliland, to whom we could appeal for preliminary suggestions, so that, all things considered, we had very few mistakes to regret ; but we might have added materially to our comfort and convenience had we depended less upon the country for outfitting purposes. Our camping material had been made up from the supplies of the European squadron, which was at Beirut when the preliminary orders were issued ; and although Admiral Cotton had placed everything on hand at our disposition, it was impossible to create that which did not exist. The camping materials of the squadron, while of excellent quality, were ordinarily used by landing parties, to whom the question of transport was a secondary consideration, and they were not at all adapted to a long journey overland, the difficulties of which were increased by every unnecessary pound of impedimenta. We set out from Diré-Daouah with American tents and food products, English camp-beds, Abyssinian saddles, French chairs, and an assortment of waterproof bags, wooden boxes, and tin trunks, of which no two were alike.

I had desired to take with me from Washington a sufficient number of army saddles for all our men, but it was feared that they would not fit the Abyssinian mule, so I contented myself with two such saddles, which were far and away the best in the expedition. The native saddle is a primitive affair of wood covered with carpet, and it is difficult to tell whether it has been invented by an enemy of man or beast, or both. The American saddle with the hooded stirrups is exactly the thing for crossing the desert, following



trails lined by thorn-bushes and passing through rocky defiles, where the foot is likely to receive many a scratch or jar unless protected or lifted out of the way. The Abyssinian bit is a shocking contrivance, consisting of a ring, which goes around the mule's lower lip, and a long projection, which extends over the tongue. When the reins are pulled, the animal's mouth is inevitably forced wide open.

If I had the journey to undertake again I should certainly equip myself in New York, where the best and most convenient camping materials may be found. The round silk waterproof tents with one pole seem to have been intended for Abyssinia. We had old-fashioned wall-tents, supported by two uprights and a ridge pole. These poles often brought our caravan to the brink of disaster. Every self-respecting camel detested them. They were the first things to shift from the load, and to run foul of the trees and brush *en route*. The saving in the cost of transportation alone would have gone a long way towards paying for the first cost of silk tents, which weigh next to nothing and possess every solid advantage.

Folding-beds, chairs, and tables are a necessity. Such as may be had in Red Sea towns are expensive and heavy. A sleeping-bag would be a great convenience. No one should undertake to sleep upon the ground unless obliged to do so. Canvas tent floors are by no means the unnecessary luxury that they sound. The vicissitudes of caravan life are reasonably certain to oblige one to camp amid foul surroundings, and the tent floor can make them, at least, not quite intolerable.

Provisions can be obtained in endless variety in New York, and freight charges are comparatively low.

I should therefore recommend bringing practically everything in the way of canned goods. The country may be depended upon for fresh beef and mutton, potatoes, onions, and game of all sorts, but the traveller will feel the need of canned soups, all kinds of vegetables, and fruit. Hard bread should not be overlooked. The preserved butter which we had was not particularly palatable, but there may be better upon the market. The country cannot be depended upon for sweet milk anywhere. The American evaporated cream stands transportation, and nothing too good can be said of it.

In crossing the desert, things which are ordinarily luxuries among camping-parties become real necessities. Mineral water, canned fruits, marmalade, sweet chocolate, cream, and tea, are most satisfying and necessary. On the other hand, we became very tired of canned corned beef and the fresh beef of the country. All of the fresh meat and, to a lesser extent, all of the game which we had was tough, as we had no means of keeping it for a proper length of time. In making up my list a second time, I should not overlook a very much larger quantity of baked beans and canned hash.

I should always have one case of mineral water to fall back upon, and to be used only in the event of urgent need, and as much more as possible. We had bottled water when we approached Addis-Ababa, but we were unable to procure any for the homeward journey. Petroleum cans or skins should certainly be carried for transporting water. It is frequently desirable to make camp twenty miles from the nearest stream or well.

Some of these things can be obtained at Port Said,

but the uncertainty of finding fresh supplies after leaving New York is such that it would be better to run no chances. A practical filter should not be forgotten. We had numerous waterproof bags for our personal belongings, which proved to be unspeakable nuisances, although easily loaded. The object sought in these bags is invariably at the bottom. Small tin trunks are far more desirable. These trunks, in size 22 by 14 by 14 inches approximately, are satisfactory and cheap. They may be loaded readily upon either mule or camel.

We hired our transport, consisting on the upward trip of forty-five camels, but purchased outright our saddle mules. These saddle mules cost from fifty to eighty thalers each, with a few high-priced exceptions, and on resale brought from thirty to sixty thalers. The native saddles used by the men cost from six to ten thalers, and sold for very little. Though we made contract time, our vexation of spirit was always very great. There were frequent opportunities for increasing the day's work, which we were prevented from doing by the dilatory methods of the camel-drivers. Nobody who has not had experience with these men, and with African mule-men, can appreciate how many difficulties may arise in dealing with them. There are moments when appeals to contract stipulations fall upon deaf ears, and only force can cause them to be respected. If peace of mind is of any consideration, it is decidedly preferable to buy transport mules outright, and sell them at the end of the journey. If care be taken in making good purchases they can be resold, and the net expense is not materially greater than by the contract method. Transport by camel is cheaper than by

mule under ordinary circumstances, but two miles an hour is all that can be expected from the camel, while mules can make from three to three and a half day after day. If one is reduced to the necessity of hiring transport, the practical thing to do is to look around quietly until persuaded that some one individual of responsibility is so situated as to be able to make the bargains, and then charge him with the task. It is practically impossible for a foreigner and a stranger to engage camel-men directly. Their methods will wear out the stoutest heart, and the prices will be no lower than may be obtained by reposing confidence in European residents or some reliable firm who understand with whom they are dealing.

Upon our return from Addis-Ababa our every department was in fairly good form. Our Abyssinian negadi, who seemed to have some appreciation of the value of time, had his animals loaded and off promptly every morning, and found better camping spots than our Danakil friends. He seemed to go instinctively to the cleanest and most attractive localities, and his judgment could be relied upon.

We cantered into Diré-Daouah before noon one day, our nineteenth out from Addis-Ababa, to receive as cordial a welcome from the European residents as we had had before. The next two days were devoted to paying bills and distributing our camping outfit to our grateful and highly receptive servants. It was more pathetic than laughable to see these faithful fellows issue forth in pink pyjamas, and wearing worn-out stockings over their unshod feet. The greatest demand was for our ancient and honoured hats. When the silk headpiece of the Commissioner,

which had caused amazement in Addis-Ababa and Harrar, was presented to Atto Pito, chief muleteer, the worthy man's joy knew no bounds. He knelt at once, before he could be prevented, and kissed the donor on both feet. Then he drew his snowy-white chamma about him, placed one hand upon his long curved sword, and strode forth, with the silk hat on the back of his head, to resume the prosaic occupation of a railroad track boss.

The American party took an early train to Djibouti, and most of the Diré-Daouah friends were at the station to see us off. There were M. Jaume, who had helped me to gather commercial information; M. Eugène Carette, who had made one of my collections of Abyssinian seeds; M. Lebertois, the geologist; and ever so many others. M. Bô, who whiles away his spare hours by collecting the brilliant birds of Abyssinia, came to the station with a parting gift of his beautiful specimens. M. Pierre Carette came with two hyenas, which were similarly offered. One of them is now in the National Zoological Park at Washington, and another in the Zoo at Paris. Atto Marcho, the choum, represented the person of the Emperor, to whom a message of farewell had been telephoned. Many kind words were said, and we parted with the warmest feelings for our African acquaintances.

Our army of servants came to the train as one man. They had all been paid off and 'gratified' the day before, so their presence could only be regarded in the light of a personal manifestation. Oualdo son of Mikael said little, but before the train started thrust into my hand a small silver cross, taken from around his own neck. It was one which his uncle, the Vicar-

General, had given him as a little boy, and which I had once admired. I tried to refuse it, until he asked me if the cross of his country were not also the cross of my country. He added that he would feel much better if he knew that I had this cross with which to remember that he had been one of the members of the expedition, and, furthermore, that it would bring me good fortune.

The three Somali soldier policemen stood shoulder to shoulder in military style, each one decorated with the 'Order of St. Louis,' as we familiarly called the colours and insignia of the great Exposition, the wearing of which gave them much satisfaction. Mohamed the cook wept steadily, and muttered at intervals, 'This is not good for me, this is not good for me!' Moslem though he was, he supported himself by holding the hand of a Christian Abyssinian. In this painful hour he laid aside religious differences, and for the moment regarded all men as brothers. Many of these faithful black servants ran wildly alongside the train when it started, until they could no longer keep up the pace, our big-hearted soldiers calling out to them from the car windows: 'Good-bye, Salassé!' 'Good-bye, Issouf!' 'Good-bye, Manfredo!' repeating the names with which we were now so familiar. Then we realized, every one of us, that we were leaving behind us real friends in Ethiopia.

It was a hot and tranquil journey to the coast. On the train there were several additional railway policemen, who got off halfway down the line to put an end to some fighting that had been going on, and to escort one of the wounded back to Diré-Daouah for medical attention. Djibouti was reached after night-fall. Everyone was tired, but full of good humour,

and more than one, I fancy, regretted the end of the life of freedom in the open air. My own recollection is that the marines and sailors sent up three rousing cheers, as the doctor, the secretary, and the Commissioner drove away. I am glad to think that the expedition came to an end with this eloquent expression of feeling, which meant more than words could convey.





## APPENDIX A

THE shortest and quickest route to Addis-Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, is by steamer from Marseilles to Djibouti, thence by rail to Diré-Daouah, and thence by caravan over the Mount Asabot trail. The American party left Marseilles on October 25, 1903, reached Djibouti on November 17, where the escort was formed, made a preliminary journey to Harrar from Diré-Daouah, and then proceeded from Diré-Daouah to the capital by the following itinerary :

*November 29, Caracalla.*—After three hours. Very bad wells, good grazing and shooting. Should have gone to Ourso.

*November 30, Ourso.*—After three hours. Fair-sized stream of good water. Flocks and herds plentiful ; good grazing.

*December 1, Hofallé.*—After three hours through stunted mimosa-groves and dreary desert. The road cannot be mistaken, and is to the left of the huge mountain which gives the camping-place its name. Camped in the dry bed of the stream, where an insufficient water-supply was found in a well. Grazing poor ; plenty of gazelles and dig-digs.

*December 2, Ergotto-Mimosa.*—After five and a half hours across stony desert. One hour and a half before reaching this place the Error River is crossed. It is a fine stream, and an excellent spot for a camp. Ergotto-Mimosa has also a fine stream. Spot said to be malarious. Supplies from village available.

*December 3, Ellabella.*—After three hours across desert and through thin mimosa-groves. Numerous large trees surrounding two wells of fair water. Flocks, herds, and game plentiful.

*December 4, Derabella.*—After four and a half hours across

beautiful meadows. Well at some distance from the route. Game in plenty; chickens and eggs may be purchased. Grass hard to find.

*December 5, Delado.*—After four hours. Country barren at first, becoming grassy and better near Delado. Plenty of water in wells. Ground camped over to a considerable distance on either side. Herds in plenty.

*December 6, Moulu.*—After four hours across rich prairies. Dig-digs, gazelles, guinea-fowl, quail, in plenty. Excellent stream.

*December 7, Meso.*—After two hours. Same country as before. We should have gone farther, camping near Mount Asabot. We remained here until 1 a.m., and then pressed on to Laga-Arba.

*December 8, Laga-Arba.*—After twelve hours. A long and wearisome journey. Game of all descriptions. Fine river; clean camping-ground by leaving the main trail. On the return journey we carried water, and camped midway between Laga-Arba and Meso, proceeding next day to Moulu. On the up journey we remained here two days for rest.

*December 10, Katchinhaha.*—After four and a half hours. A beautiful stream; plenty of game. A short distance before Katchinhaha the route joins the highway from Harrar and Addis-Ababa. We now followed the telegraph line to Addis-Ababa.

*December 11, Fantallé.*—After eight hours. We left Katchinhaha at eight o'clock, and after numerous vicissitudes—crossing the important Hawash River *en route*—reached Fantallé about 5 p.m. Found foul water in crevices of rocks; better water higher up. No water at all when we returned. Antelopes, dig-digs, and winged game in plenty. A very hard day's journey.

*December 12, Tadechemalka.*—After five hours. Good camping-ground on the Kassan River.

*December 13, Choba.*—After four hours. No water; Kassan River two hours away. Travellers should telephone to authorities ordering jars of water to be in readiness, or transport same from previous camp.

*December 14, Minabella.*—After five hours across splendid farming country. Found a reservoir *en route* to left, and watered mules. Diverged to right of main trail at Minabella, and camped near large reservoir. Grazing excellent. Guinea-fowl and plover in plenty.

*December 15, Baltchi.*—After five and a half hours. Struggled up the mountain and camped before the village. An unfavourable spot on account of vermin. Water is to be found below in the ravine. When we returned we camped below. Supplies in plenty; wood scarce.

*December 16, Chaffee-Dunsa.*—After seven hours. Camped on beautiful prairie beside good stream. Small quantities of fuel to be bought in neighbouring villages.

*December 17, Akaki.*—After six hours. Camped on banks of fair-sized river. Conditions favourable.

*December 18, Shola.*—After two hours. Fine prairies and good spring. Here we remained only long enough to prepare for our official entry. This was our first camp when we returned.

*December 18, Addis-Ababa.*—After one hour.

Total approximate distance from Diré-Daouah to Addis-Ababa, 275 miles.

## APPENDIX B

### MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN PARTY.

#### *Commissioner.*

Robert P. Skinner.

#### *Surgeon.*

Dr. A. P. L. Pease.

#### *Secretary.*

Horatio W. Wales.

#### *Lieutenant (U.S.N.).*

C. L. Hussey.

#### *Captain (U.S.M.C.).*

G. C. Thorpe.

#### *Sergeant.*

Glenn, Robert J.

#### *Corporal.*

Wood, Walter.

#### *Privates.*

Gates, Leonard L.

Flay, Hudson J.

Nelson, Charles.

Coleman, John M.

Durland, Ralph A.

Dauth, Frederick

Freel, John F.

Hebert, Benjamin F.

Howell, Theodore E.

Nilton, John G.

O'Connor, Patrick.

Scott, Henry J.

Steele, Harry R.

Twieg, George J.

Vernon, William.

Wurm, William.

Maddock, Ritchie S.

Aldrich, Roy M.

Schultz, William.

Rossell, Joseph A.

#### *Hospital Steward.*

Fearnley, William H.

#### *Messenger, American Consular Service.*

Rivière, Hubert Vivien.

APPENDIX C

TREATY

BETWEEN THE

UNITED STATES AND THE KING OF ETHIOPIA

TO REGULATE THE

COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES

*Signed at Addis-Ababa, December 27, 1903.*

*Ratification advised by the Senate, March 12, 1904.*

*Ratified by the President, March 17, 1904.*

*King of Ethiopia notified of ratification, August 2, 1904.*

*Proclaimed, September 30, 1904.*

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS a treaty of commerce between the United States of America and His Majesty Menelik II., King of Kings of Ethiopia, was concluded on the twenty-seventh day of December, one thousand nine hundred and three, the original of which treaty, being in the Amharic\* and French languages, is word for word as follows:

(Translation.)

TREATY OF COMMERCE.

TRAITÉ DE COMMERCE.

His Majesty Menelik II.,      Sa Majesté Menilek II.,  
King of Kings of Ethiopia,      Roi des Rois d'Éthiopie, et  
and the United States of      les États-Unis d'Amérique,  
America, having agreed to      ayant convenu de régler les

\* Amharic text not printed.

regulate the commercial relations between the two countries and develop them, and render them more and more advantageous to the two contracting Powers :

His Majesty Menelik II., King of Kings of Ethiopia, in the name of the Empire, and Robert P. Skinner, in the name of the United States of America, have agreed and stipulated that which follows :

#### ARTICLE I.

The citizens of the two Powers, like the citizens of other countries, shall be able freely to travel and to transact business throughout the extent of the territories of the two contracting Powers, while respecting the usages and submitting themselves to the tribunals of the countries in which they may be located.

#### ARTICLE II.

In order to facilitate commercial relations, the two Governments shall assure, throughout the extent of their respective territories, the security of those engaged in business therein and of their property.

relations commerciales entre les deux pays de les développer, et de les rendre de plus en plus avantageuses aux deux Puissances contractantes :

Sa Majesté Menilek II., Roi des Rois d'Éthiopie, au nom de Son Empire, et Robert P. Skinner, muni des pleins pouvoirs du Président Roosevelt, au nom des États-Unis d'Amérique, ont convenu et stipulé ce qui suit :

#### ARTICLE I.

Les citoyens des deux Puissances pourront en toute liberté, comme les citoyens des autres pays, circuler et commercer dans l'étendue des territoires des deux Puissances contractantes, en respectant les usages et se soumettant aux tribunaux du pays où ils se trouveront.

#### ARTICLE II.

Afin de faciliter les relations commerciales, les deux Gouvernements assureront, dans l'étendue de leurs territoires respectifs, la sécurité des commerçants et de leurs biens.

## ARTICLE III.

The two contracting Governments shall reciprocally grant to all citizens of the United States of America and to the citizens of Ethiopia all the advantages which they shall accord to other Powers in respect to Customs duties, imposts, and jurisdiction.

## ARTICLE IV.

Throughout the extent of the Ethiopian Empire the citizens of the United States of America shall have the use of the telegraphs, posts, and all other means of transportation upon the same terms as the citizens of other Powers.

## ARTICLE V.

In order to perpetuate and strengthen the friendly relations which exist between Ethiopia and the United States of America, the two Governments agree to receive reciprocally representatives acceptable to the two Governments. These representatives shall not, however, be maintained at their posts unless they are agreeable to the receiving Power; in such cases they shall be replaced.

## ARTICLE III.

Les deux Gouvernements contractants feront réciproquement bénéficier tous les citoyens des États-Unis d'Amérique et les citoyens Éthiopiens de tous les avantages qu'ils accorderont à d'autres Puissances comme droits de douanes, d'impôts, ou de juridiction.

## ARTICLE IV.

Dans l'étendue de l'Empire Éthiopien les citoyens des États-Unis d'Amérique auront l'usage des télégraphes, postes, et tous autres moyens de transports aux mêmes tarifs que les citoyens des autres Puissances.

## ARTICLE V.

Pour perpétuer et fortifier les rapports amicaux qui existent entre l'Éthiopie et les États-Unis d'Amérique, les deux Gouvernements conviennent de recevoir réciproquement des représentants agréés par les deux Gouvernements. Ces représentants ne pourront toutefois être maintenus à leur poste que s'ils sont agréables à l'autre Puissance; en cas contraire ils seront remplacés.

## ARTICLE VI.

The duration of the present treaty shall be ten years. It is understood that at the expiration of these ten years the two Governments shall be able to modify all or any part of this treaty. The Government which shall request at that time the modification shall make its proposal to the other Government one year before the expiration of the treaty.

## ARTICLE VII.

The present treaty shall take effect, if ratified by the Government of the United States, and if this ratification shall be notified to His Majesty Menelik II., King of Kings of Ethiopia, within the period of one year.

His Majesty Menelik II., King of Kings of Ethiopia, in the name of his Empire, and Robert P. Skinner, in virtue of his full powers, in the name of the United States of America, have signed the present treaty, written in double text, Amharic and French, and in identical terms.

Done at Addis-Ababa this seventeenth day of December, one thousand eight hundred

## ARTICLE VI.

La durée du présent traité sera de dix années. Il est entendu qu'à l'expiration des dix années les deux Gouvernements pourront modifier tout ou partie de ce traité. Celui des deux Gouvernements qui demandera à ce moment une modification devra en faire la proposition à l'autre Gouvernement une année avant l'expiration du traité.

## ARTICLE VII.

Ce présent traité entrera en vigueur s'il est ratifié par le Gouvernement des États-Unis, et si cette ratification est signifiée à Sa Majesté Menilek II., Roi des Rois d'Éthiopie, dans le délai d'une année.

Sa Majesté Menilek II., Roi des Rois d'Éthiopie, au nom de Son Empire, et Robert P. Skinner, en vertu de ses pleins pouvoirs, au nom des États-Unis d'Amérique, ont signé le présent traité, rédigé en double texte, Amharigua et Français, en tout semblables.

Fait à Addis-Ababa le dix-sept Décembre, mil huit cent quatre vingt seize de l'an de



and ninety-six, in the year grâce (correspondant au 27 of grace (corresponding to Decembre, 1903).  
December 27, 1903).

[Seal of MENELIK II.]

(Signed) ROBERT P. SKINNER.

And whereas it is provided by the said treaty that it shall take effect 'if ratified by the Government of the United States of America, and if this ratification shall be notified to His Majesty King Menelik II., King of Kings of Ethiopia, within the period of one year';

And whereas the said treaty has been duly ratified on the part of the United States of America, and notification of such ratification was given to His Majesty Menelik II., King of Kings of Ethiopia, on the second day of August, one thousand nine hundred and four;

Now, therefore, be it known that I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, have caused the said treaty to be made public, to the end that the same and every article and clause thereof may be observed and fulfilled with good faith by the United States and the citizens thereof.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington this thirtieth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and twenty-ninth.

[SEAL]

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

By the President:

FRANCIS B. LOOMIS,

*Acting-Secretary of State.*









